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# Baby Steps

ベイビーステップ

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11
Baby Step
ベイビーステップ
勝木 光

# Baby Steps 人物紹介

ベイビーステップ

## 自ら申し込んだタクマとの

エーちゃん、テニス留学の真価はいかに!?

「タクマさんに勝つぐらいじゃなきゃプロにはなれない」

### エーちゃん
### 丸尾栄一郎

STC所属。「次の全日本ジュニアで優勝、そしてプロへ」を命題に、テニス漬け生活真っ只中。FLテニスアカデミーへの短期留学も経験し、一回り成長!! くっつきそうでくっつかないなっちゃんとの仲にヤキモキ。

なっちゃんからメールだ…♥

### ナツ
### 鷹崎奈津

STC所属。神奈川トップレベルの女子選手。テニス留学中のエーちゃんを陰ながら手助けしたりと、頼もしい存在。エーちゃんの一番身近にいる女の子。

### 青井コーチ

STCでのエーちゃんのコーチ。元プロ選手という経験に裏付けされた指導でエーちゃんをサポート。

# 試合スタート!!

全日本ジュニア選抜室内選手権大会・出場選手

エーちゃんは予選敗退・

難波江●優
不得意が少なくて、データ重視のプレー。完敗を喫したエーちゃんにとって、眼前の壁。

優足が生むライジング
神田●久志

圧制的な精神力
井出●義明

強烈力ゼットンのライジング
岡田●隆行

一発逆転系のベースライナー
荒谷●寛

エーちゃんが越えなくてはならない壁!!

池●爽児
エーちゃんと同い年のプロ選手。戦いの場をアメリカに移し、現在、FLテニスアカデミーに所属。ナツの幼なじみで、彼女がプロを目指すきっかけとなった人物。逞にも多大な影響を与える。

江川●逞
STC所属。高校卒業後プロに転向予定。既に、世界ランク500位に迫る勢い。エーちゃんの目標であり、ライバルでもある。

# Baby Steps

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# to Giant Strides

# #94 HARD SHOT

ドッ
CONTROL!!
アーン
!?
アーン

ボッ
30 - LOVE
OUT!
...BUT I CAN'T MATCH TAKUMA-SAN IN HEIGHT OR POWER
SINCE I DON'T HAVE A CLUE ON HOW TO BREAK TAKUMA-SAN'S SERVE YET,
I ABSOLUTELY CANNOT LOSE MY SERVICE GAME

NINE PATTERN SERVE PLUS TEMPO CHANGES...
I'LL FIGHT WITH EIGHTEEN DIFFERENT SERVES!!
TO BRIDGE THE GAP, USE ALEX'S NINE PATTERN SERVE WITH THREE DIRECTIONS AND THREE SHOT TYPES,
ALONG WITH NABAE-KUN'S USE OF VARYING TEMPO...
HA
!
HUNTIMALS

WAH
OUT!
40 - LOVE
BOTH THIS RETURN AND THE ONE BEFORE... HE'S HITTING HARD SHOTS ALL OF A SUDDEN
IT COULD BE THAT HE'S MISSING BECAUSE I'M DOING WELL, BUT...

TAKUMA'S MISS RIGHT NOW WASN'T LUCKY AT ALL KIDDO...
TIGHTEN UP YOUR GRIP AND ATTACK
HA!!
HUNIMALS
HA
FOLLOW UP A SPIN SERVE WITH A FLAT ONE...!!
HE'S FORCING HIMSELF UP!!
HA

OPENINGS!!
HA
DONATION

HUNIMALS
.....
ALRIGHT!
GAME, MARUO: 1 - 1
FIRST SERVICE GAME HELD!!
ARICA
DONATION

I CAN'T WIN!!
IF I CAN'T RETURN THIS SERVE, ...
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I HOLD,
OKAY , HERE COMES THAT TROUBLESOME SERVE.

ビクッ
ドキ
ドキ
YIKES~ 00°

NO ONE CAN MAKE HIS FIRST SERVE EVERY TIME...
THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE TO GAIN AN ADVANTAGE BY CONTROLLING THE SECOND SERVES
BUT THE SECOND SERVE SHOULD BE SLOWER, SO THAT'S MY CHANCE!!
ONCE I MAKE A CONTROLLED RETURN, I'LL IMMEDIATELY ATTACK.
EVEN IF I CAN'T DO MUCH, IF I CAN APPLY PRESSURE HERE, IT SHOULD HAVE SOME EFFECT ON HIS FIRST SERVES..
THE IMPORTANT THING IS THE RETURN!!
COME!!

15 - LOVE
WHOA...

THE CREDIT FOR TAKUMA'S SUCCESS AS A PROFESSIONAL IS DUE TO THE ASTONISHING IMPROVEMENT OF HIS SERVES
YEAH. . BY PLAYING AS A PRO, HE MUST'VE FINALLY REALIZED IT

It curved like crazy
DAMN IT . I UNDERESTIMATED HIM!!
THIS IS WHY HE CAN HIT THAT KIND OF FIRST SERVE!!

JAPAN'S LEADING BIG SERVER

HOW HIS FAVORITE SERVE THAT HE ALWAYS PRACTICED, EVEN WHEN HE WAS SLACKING,
IS SUCH A VALUABLE SHOT IN THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD WHERE YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE

ALTHOUGH IT TOOK A WHILE, HE EVENTUALLY REALIZED IT
THAT'S WHY HE WAS FINALLY ABLE TO BECOME.

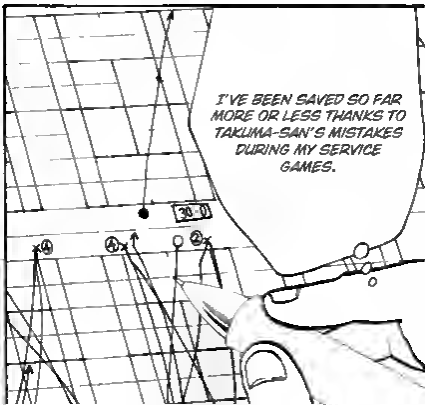
GAME, TAKUMA LEADS 2 - 1..
4TH GAME. ALTHOUGH EIICHIRO DESPERATELY MANAGES TO HOLD USING HIS CONTROL....
HA
GAME, TAKUMA LEADS 3 - 2..
HE STILL COULDN'T FIND A WAY TO BREAK IN THE 5TH GAME.

かき
かき
かき
CARICA
DONATION

I'VE YET TO GRASP ANY PATTERN ON HIS SECOND SERVE

BUT IT'S NO GOOD!
AT THIS RATE, I'LL EVENTU-ALLY LOSE
SOMEHOW I'VE BEEN ABLE TO KEEP UP SO FAR

I CAN ONLY GUESS THAT HE'S WILLING TO TAKE THAT KIND OF RISK BECAUSE HE'S ATTACKING MY CONTROL SHOTS WITH SO MUCH POWER.
STILL, THOSE HARD SHOT ERRORS THAT HE HITS ALL OF A SUDDEN...

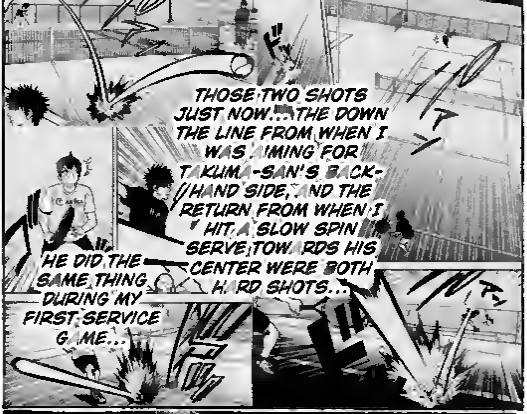

I'VE BEEN SAVED SO FAR MORE OR LESS THANKS TO TAKUMA-SAN'S MISTAKES DURING MY SERVICE GAMES.
30-0

AND I'M SURE THEY'LL EVENTUALLY START COMING IN..
IT'S NOT SOMETHING THE CURRENT ME CAN DO
TAKUMA-SAN CAN DO IT BE-CAUSE HE HAS SUCH ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE IN HIS SERVES
I GOTTA FIGURE SOMETHING OUT BEFORE THAT HAP-PENS!!
TIME
prince
HA

パコーン
ドゴッ

LOVE - 15
DOWN THE LINE HARD SHOT..!!
IT'S ALREADY STARTED COMING IN!!

HA
STAY CALM . IT'S MY SERVE
FIRST, FIGURE OUT WHERE THOSE ARE COMING FROM .
LOVE - 30
CRAP... ANOTHER FAST RETURN!!


THOSE TWO SHOTS JUST NOW...THE DOWN THE LINE FROM WHEN I WAS AIMING FOR TAKUMA-SAN'S BACK-HAND SIDE, AND THE RETURN FROM WHEN I HIT A SLOW SPIN SERVE TOWARDS HIS CENTER WERE BOTH HARD SHOTS...
HE DID THE SAME THING DURING MY FIRST SERVICE GAME...

...WAIT A SEC
ARICA
DONATION

NO WAY... I SEE IT NOW!!

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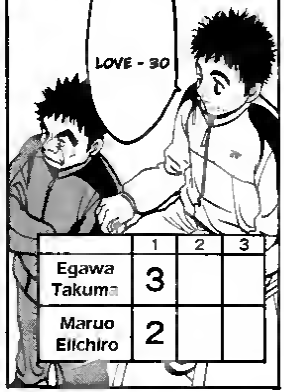
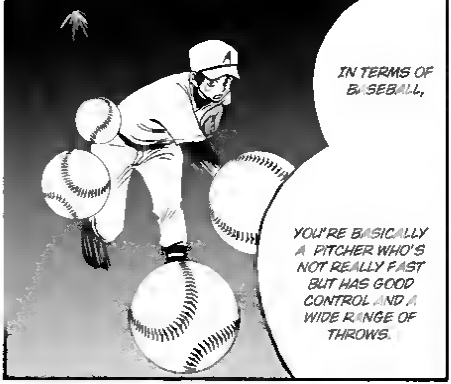
#95 STRATEGY

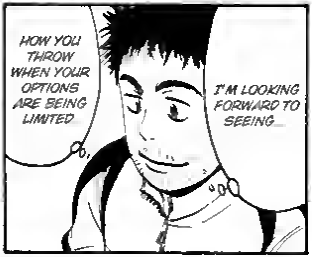

LOVE - 30
1 2 3
Egawa Takuma 3
Maruo Eiichiro 2

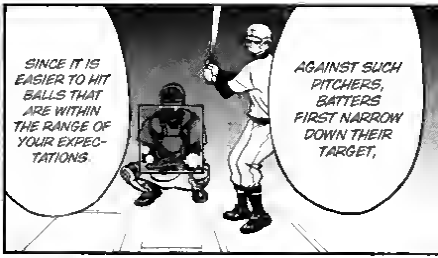
HE'S NARROWING HIS TARGET
ON WHICH OF MY SHOTS TO RETURN WITH HIS HARD SHOT

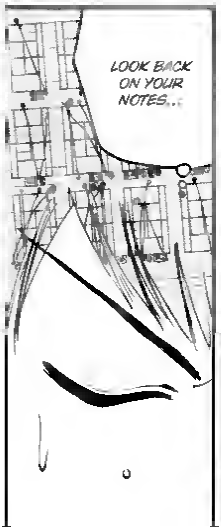
!?
THE DOWN-THE-LINE I AIMED TOWARD TAKUMA-SAN'S BACKHAND SIDE,
AND THE SLOW SPIN SERVE I HIT TOWARD THE CENTER WERE RETURNED HARD SHOTS!...

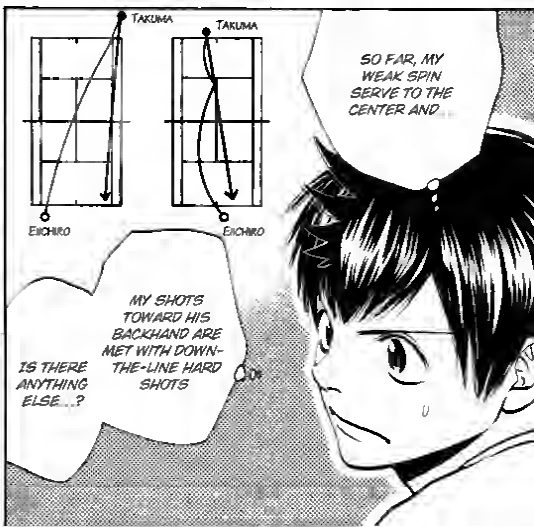

IN TERMS OF BASEBALL,
YOU'RE BASICALLY A PITCHER WHO'S NOT REALLY FAST BUT HAS GOOD CONTROL AND A WIDE RANGE OF THROWS.

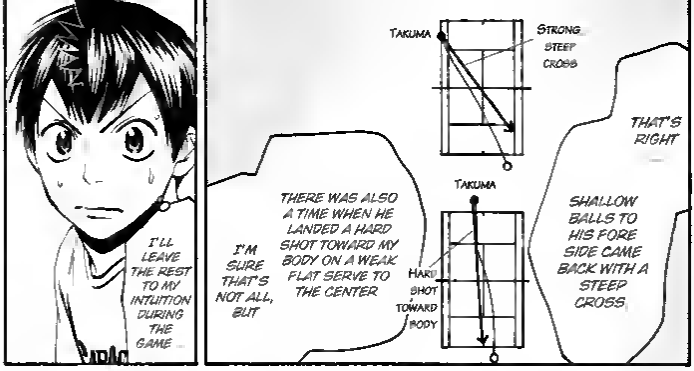
HAS HE FINALLY NOTICED?

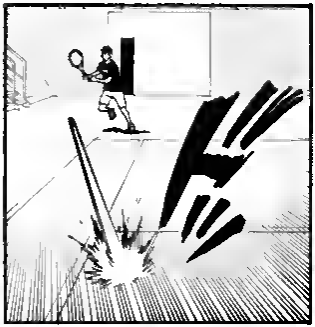

HOW YOU THROW WHEN YOUR OPTIONS ARE BEING LIMITED
I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING...

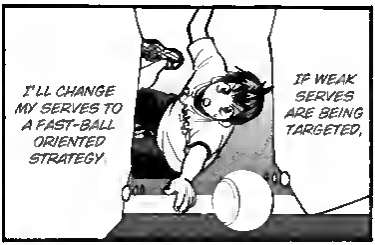

SINCE IT IS EASIER TO HIT BALLS THAT ARE WITHIN THE RANGE OF YOUR EXPECTATIONS.
AGAINST SUCH PITCHERS, BATTERS FIRST NARROW DOWN THEIR TARGET,


LOOK BACK ON YOUR NOTES...


TAKUMA
EIICHIRO
TAKUMA
EIICHIRO
SO FAR, MY WEAK SPIN SERVE TO THE CENTER AND...
MY SHOTS TOWARD HIS BACKHAND ARE MET WITH DOWN-THE-LINE HARD SHOTS
IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE...?


I'LL LEAVE THE REST TO MY INTUITION DURING THE GAME
I'M SURE THAT'S NOT ALL, BUT
THERE WAS ALSO A TIME WHEN HE LANDED A HARD SHOT TOWARD MY BODY ON A WEAK FLAT SERVE TO THE CENTER
TAKUMA
STRONG STEEP CROSS
HARD SHOT TOWARD BODY
THAT'S RIGHT
SHALLOW BALLS TO HIS FORE SIDE CAME BACK WITH A STEEP CROSS




I'LL CHANGE MY SERVES TO A FAST-BALL ORIENTED STRATEGY
IF WEAK SERVES ARE BEING TARGETED,

IT GOT WEAKER

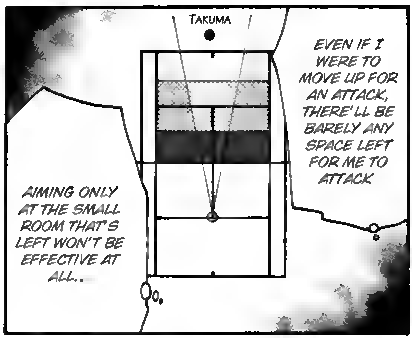
ANYWAY, I WON'T LET HIM LAND ANYMORE POWER SHOTS!!

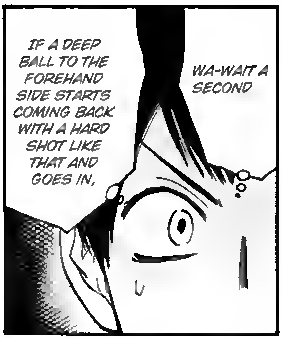
HIS BACKHAND SIDE IS SLIGHTLY OPEN!
HE PROBABLY MADE THAT OPENING ON PURPOSE!!
THEN EVEN IF IT'S A BIT TIGHT...
BUT IF I GO FOR HIS BACKHAND SIDE, HE'LL HIT A HARD SHOT DOWN-THE-LINE.
HA

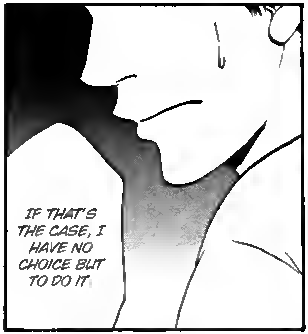
!
TAKUMA
COMES BACK WITH HARD SHOTS
COMES BACK WITH HARD SHOTS
BECOMES A CHANCE BALL BECAUSE IT'S TOO SHALLOW
HIGH RISK OF MISSING.
BACKHAND SIDE AND SHALLOW FOREHAND SIDE WILL COME BACK WITH A HARD SHOT.
SINCE I CAN'T CARELESSLY BE HITTING TOO SHALLOW.

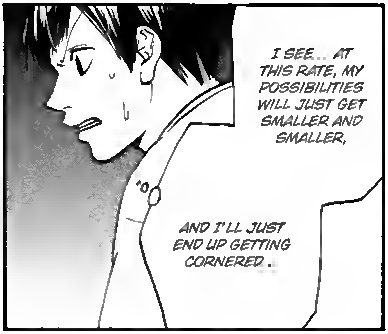
WAIT UNTIL A CHANCE COMES...!!
CONTROL WITHIN THE BOUNDARY OF MY POSSIBILITIES!!
!?

HUNIMALS
OUT!
15 - 30
A HARD HIT FROM THERE?


TAKUMA
EVEN IF I WERE TO MOVE UP FOR AN ATTACK, THERE'LL BE BARELY ANY SPACE LEFT FOR ME TO ATTACK
AIMING ONLY AT THE SMALL ROOM THAT'S LEFT WON'T BE EFFECTIVE AT ALL..


WA-WAIT A SECOND
IF A DEEP BALL TO THE FOREHAND SIDE STARTS COMING BACK WITH A HARD SHOT LIKE THAT AND GOES IN,


IF THAT'S THE CASE, I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DO IT.


I SEE... AT THIS RATE, MY POSSIBILITIES WILL JUST GET SMALLER AND SMALLER,
AND I'LL JUST END UP GETTING CORNERED.

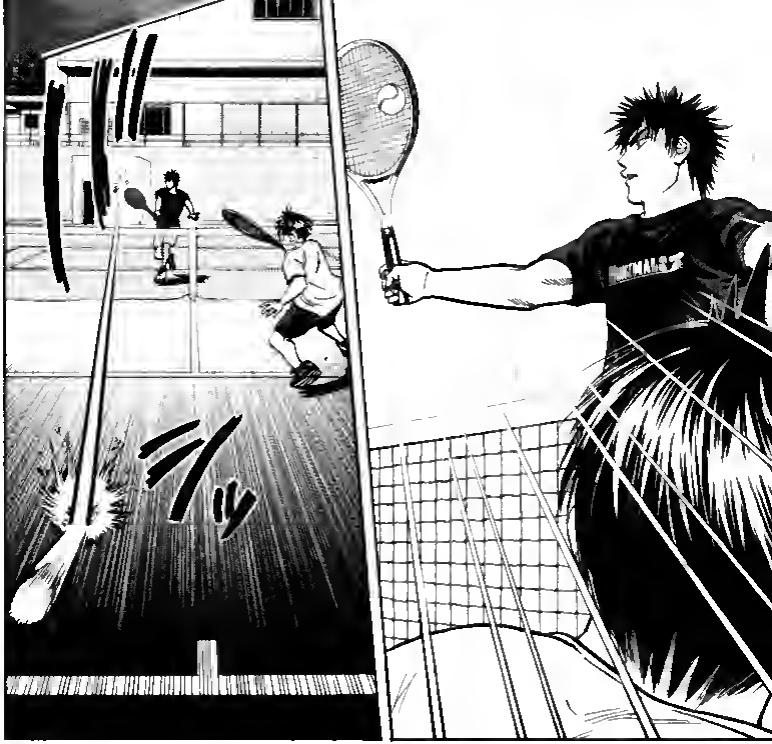
A HEAD-ON-BATTLE... AGAINST THAT HARD SHOT!!

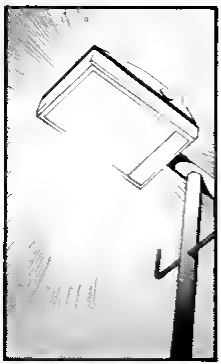
DOWN-THE-LINE, BRING IT ON!!

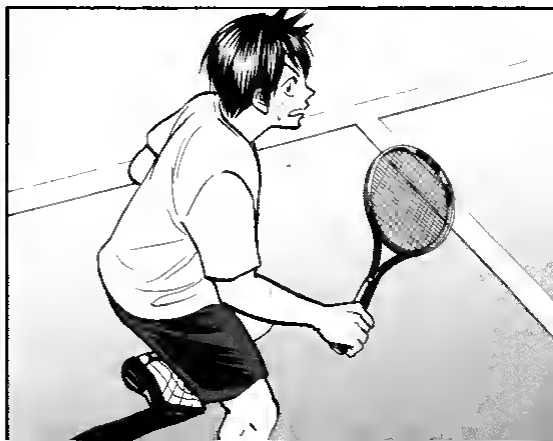
IF I CHAL-LENGE HIM DI-RECTLY
I HAVE A GOOD GRASP ON WHERE HE'S GOING TO HIT

HE'LL DEFINITELY RETURN IT WITH THAT!!

ARGH!
HERE IT COMES!!
IT'S TOUGH!!
THAT WON'T DO IT!!
A SHALLOW ONE TO HIS FOREHAND
RGH
THAT MEANS A CROSS AGAIN...!!







15 - 40
HUNIMALS

I CAN'T FIGHT OR FLEE FROM THEM
THESE HARD SHOTS ...

TCH...

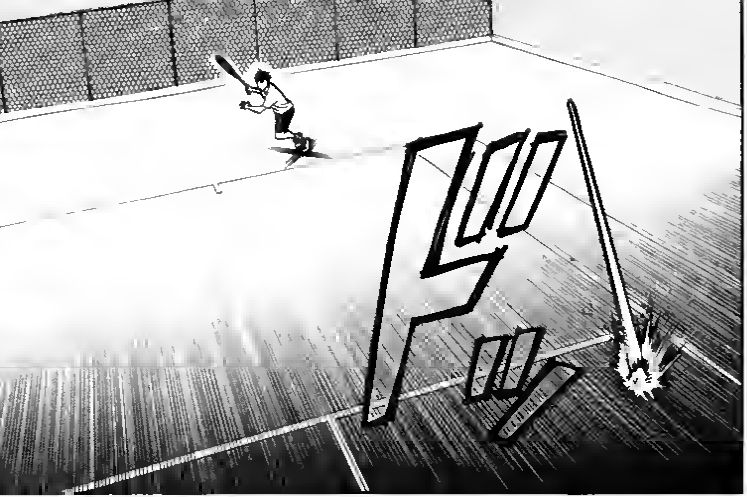
HA
RGH
NO... NOT YET!! I WAS ONLY A STEP AWAY FROM IT!!
HA
UNLIKE STROKES, TAKING THE LEAD WITH A SERVE IS A MUST.
SO I CAN'T LET HIM GET A HARD SHOT THIS TIME
AVOID THE WEAK SERVES, AND FOCUS MAINLY ON THE FAST SERVES!!
IF YOU KEEP ON RETURNING SERVES WITH THAT LEVEL OF SPEED,

YOU CAN'T HELP YOUR EYES ADJUST-ING TO THEM
.....
GAME!

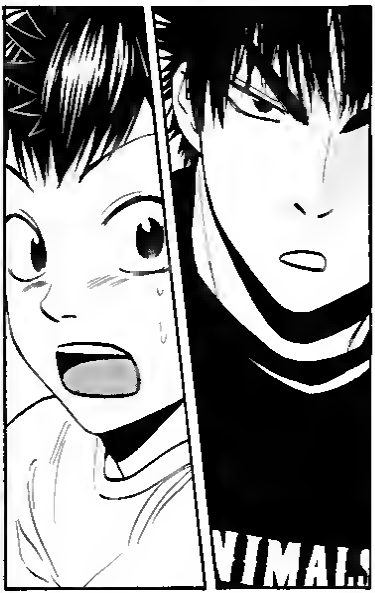
4 - 2.
TAKUMA'S
LEAD.
HE BROKE
...!!
...
CALM DOWN... NOTHING GOOD WILL COME FROM RUSHING UNDER A SITUATION LIKE THIS.
THEN WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
FAST-BALL ORIENTED SERVES... WON'T WORK!!
+1
ARICA

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THIS RETURN GAME IS TO FIGHT BACK THIS SERVE.
RECOMPOSE YOURSELF!!
RGH
16 - LOVE
30 - LOVE

SHOOT ... IT'S HIGH.
ドン
40 - LOVE
IN THAT CASE, I'LL TAKE MY CHANCES ...!!
RGH
!
ALL-OR-NOTHING!!
ダッ


FWOO

GAME, TAKUMA. 5 - 2


VIMALS

THE REASON I MADE YOU PLAY AGAINST TAKUMI...
ISN'T IT ABOUT TIME YOU REALIZE IT?

....

IN ORDER TO TURN YOUR CONTROL INTO A MUCH MORE POWERFUL WEAPON
THINK CAREFULLY... ABOUT WHAT YOU NEED RIGHT NOW,

NEXT... MY SERVE...

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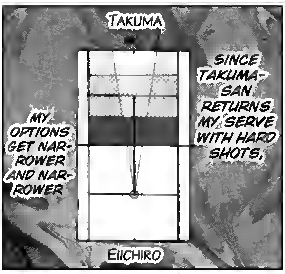
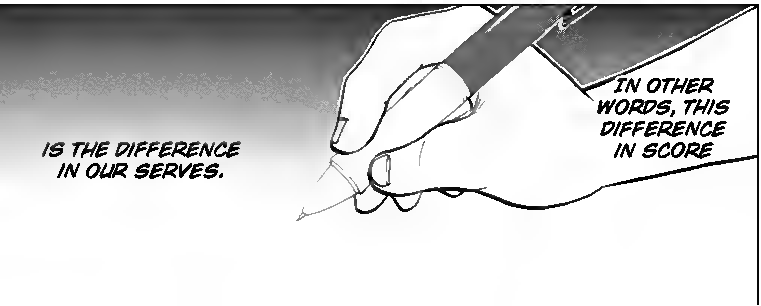
#96 PRIORITIZING REASON

THE REASON HE CAN HIT THOSE HARD SHOTS IS BECAUSE HE HAS ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE
ON KEEPING HIS GAME WITH THOSE SERVES AND TURNING MY SERVES INTO RALLY BATTLES.



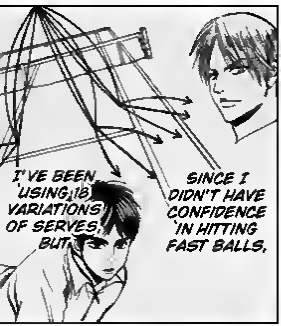



I WANT IT!
I WANT THAT SORT OF SERVE TOO.

EVEN IF IT DOESN'T GET ME THAT FAR, AT LEAST SOMETHING THAT WILL PUT ME IN AN ABSOLUTE ADVANTAGE.
NO...
A SERVE LIKE TAKUMA-SAN'S, THAT CAN COMPLETELY DOMINATE THE OPPONENT IN ONE STROKE...

TIME!

HUNMAS

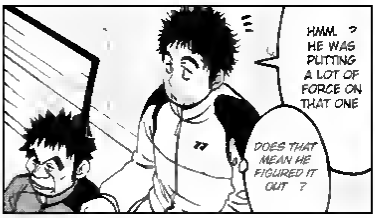

I'VE BEEN USING 18 VARIATIONS OF SERVES, BUT...
SINCE I DIDN'T HAVE CONFIDENCE IN HITTING FAST BALLS,

IF THAT'S THE CASE ...

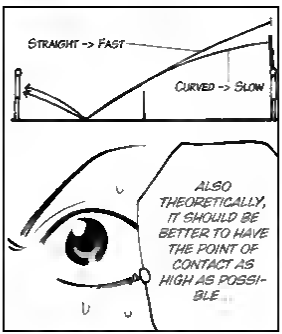
STRONG SERVES ARE A MUST!!
EVEN IF I DON'T HAVE THE POWER NOR THE CONFIDENCE,
IF I WANT TO FIGHT ON THIS LEVEL...

I'LL HIT WITH ALL MY STRENGTH!!
ARRRGH

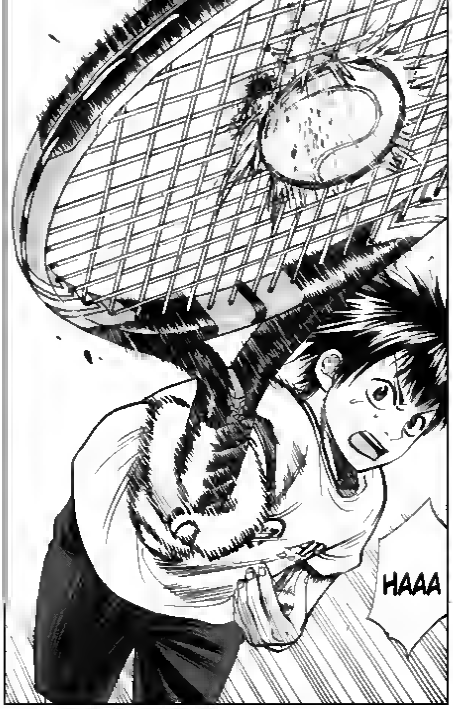
GRRR


HMM. ? HE WAS PUTTING A LOT OF FORCE ON THAT ONE
DOES THAT MEAN HE FIGURED IT OUT ?

...


STRAIGHT -> FAST
CURVED -> SLOW
ALSO THEORETICALLY, IT SHOULD BE BETTER TO HAVE THE POINT OF CONTACT AS HIGH AS POSSIBLE

RHYTHM WAS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR ON STROKES TOO
SHOOT..!! I FORGOT THAT IT WON'T WORK IF YOU PUT IN TOO MUCH FORCE..
トン
トーン

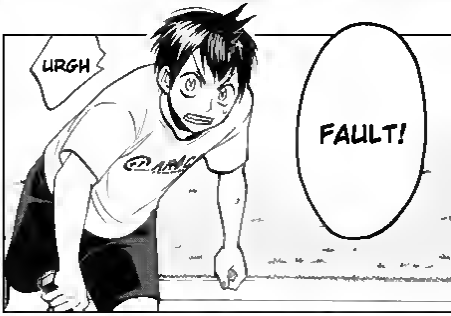

HAAA

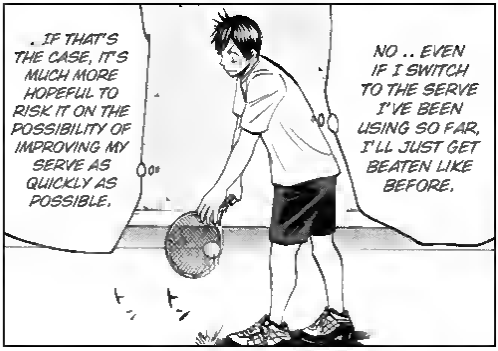
HIT AT THE HIGHEST POINT POSSIBLE...

HUNIMALS

DOUBLE FAULT. 0-15.
DAMN IT.
....
MAYBE I NEED TO PLACE THE BALL MORE FORWARD THE HIGHER I HIT?
...ALSO, THAT FELT LIKE I WAS HITTING JUST WITH MY ARMS.
FOLLOW THE RHYTHM. PLACE THE BALL FURTHER UP AND PUT ALL YOUR WEIGHT INTO IT.

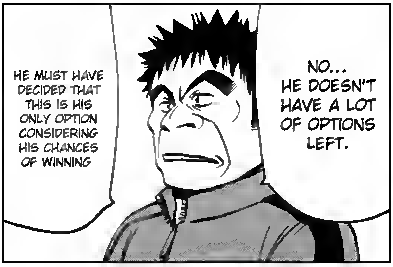
IT'S STILL NOT GOOD ENOUGH.
SPEED WENT UP, AND IT'S CLOSER TO THE BOX, BUT

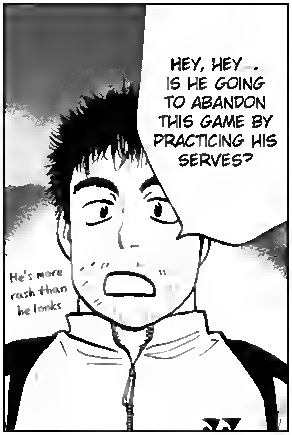

URGH
FAULT!

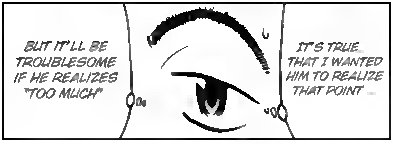

. IF THAT'S THE CASE, IT'S MUCH MORE HOPEFUL TO RISK IT ON THE POSSIBILITY OF IMPROVING MY SERVE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.
NO .. EVEN IF I SWITCH TO THE SERVE I'VE BEEN USING SO FAR, I'LL JUST GET BEATEN LIKE BEFORE.

I'M MAKING MYSELF LOSE
SHOOT... A CONSECUTIVE DOUBLE FAULT ON A 2-5 PINCH IS BAD!!

ドッ
HAAA
DOUBLE FAULT! 0-30.
I CAN'T WIN THIS MATCH IF MY SERVE DOESN'T CHANGE.
DIDN'T I REALIZE ONCE I GOT CRUSHED BY THOSE POWER SHOTS OVER AND OVER?!


HE MUST HAVE DECIDED THAT THIS IS HIS ONLY OPTION CONSIDERING HIS CHANCES OF WINNING
NO... HE DOESN'T HAVE A LOT OF OPTIONS LEFT.


HEY, HEY... IS HE GOING TO ABANDON THIS GAME BY PRACTICING HIS SERVES?
He's more crash than he looks


BUT IT'LL BE TROUBLESOME IF HE REALIZES "TOO MUCH"
IT'S TRUE. THAT I WANTED HIM TO REALIZE THAT POINT...

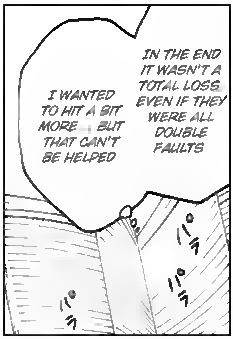
HA
DOUBLE FAULT! 0-40.
HUH...? THIS TIME, MY AIM GOT BETTER, BUT MY SPEED DROPPED.

HA
I SEE IF THAT'S THE CASE
I'VE GOT NO CHOICE!!
IF I DON'T MAKE THIS, I'LL LOSE THE 1ST SET, BUT

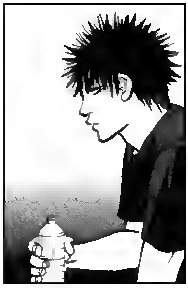
FAULT!
AS EXPECTED, IT GOT FASTER!!
THE FEELING OF TRANSFERRING MY LOWER BODY STRENGTH TO MY UPPER BODY IS ALSO SIMILAR TO A STROKE!!
BUT SINCE I'M SWINGING MY RACKET FROM TOP TO BOTTOM, I NEED TO USE MY SHOULDER, ELBOW, AND WRIST MORE THAN A SIMPLE STROKE
ALSO, THE WEIGHT MOVEMENT ISN'T FROM BACK TO FRONT LIKE A STROKE,
BUT FROM BOTTOM TO DIAGONALLY UP, SO IT PUTS MORE STRAIN ON THE ELBOW
MAYBE IT'S BETTER FOR ME TO PAY ATTENTION TO THE ORDER IN WHICH MY WEIGHT IS MOVING
DIAGONALLY UP
BACK
FRONT
BOTTOM
AH, YES!!
HEYYY~
Cut it out!!
FOR MY LACK OF POWER DUE TO MY HEIGHT.
PHEW
MOVE THE WEIGHT ON MY KNEE FROM THE BOTTOM IN ORDER FROM
I WOULD HAVE TO MAKE UP FOR IT WITH EFFICIENT MOVEMENTS!!

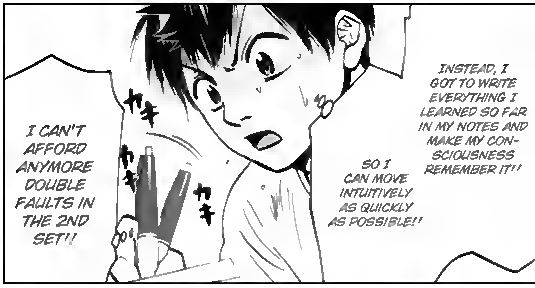
SHOULDER
ELBOW
WRIST!!

ARICA
DONATION

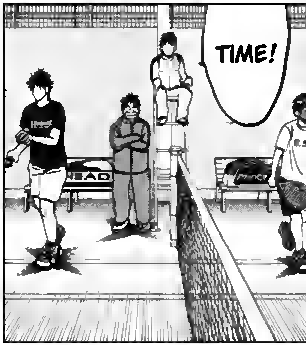

I WANTED TO HIT A BIT MORE... BUT THAT CAN'T BE HELPED
IN THE END IT WASN'T A TOTAL LOSS EVEN IF THEY WERE ALL DOUBLE FAULTS
パシ
パシ
パシ

ALTHOUGH IT'S LITTLE BY LITTLE, IT'S GETTING BETTER!!
BUT...
THAT LAST ONE WAS PRETTY GOOD!!

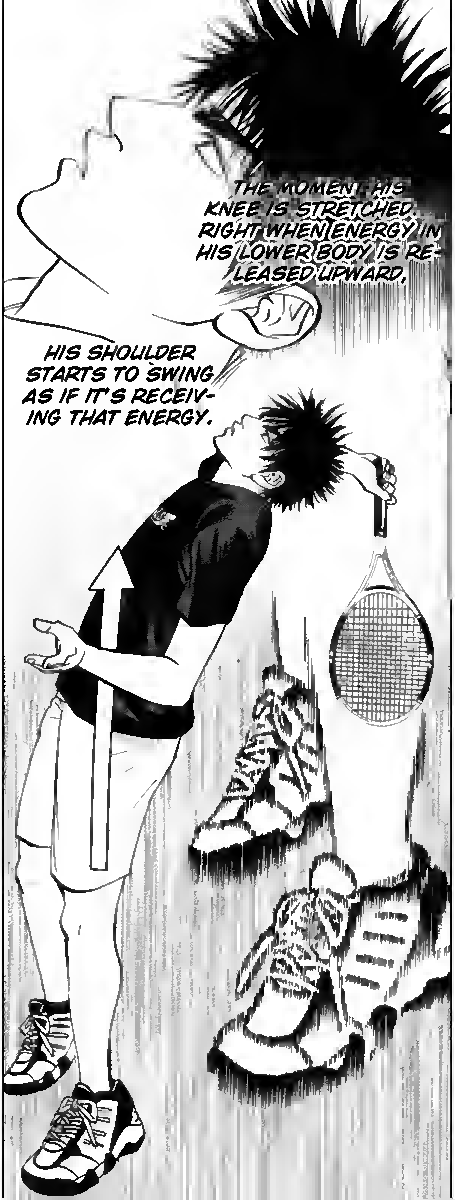


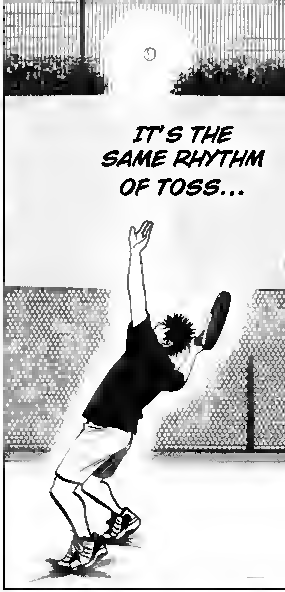

I CAN'T AFFORD ANYMORE DOUBLE FAULTS IN THE 2ND SET!!
カキ
カキ
カキ
SO I CAN MOVE INTUITIVELY AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE!!
INSTEAD, I GOT TO WRITE EVERYTHING I LEARNED SO FAR IN MY NOTES AND MAKE MY CONSCIOUSNESS REMEMBER IT!!

I GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS TOO
LET'S SEE... THE RETURN GAME


TIME!

FIRST, LOOK CAREFULLY
I HAVE TO SOMEHOW RETURN IT!!
AH...


THE MOMENT HIS KNEE IS STRETCHED, RIGHT WHEN ENERGY IN HIS LOWER BODY IS RELEASED UPWARD,
HIS SHOULDER STARTS TO SWING AS IF IT'S RECEIVING THAT ENERGY.


IT'S THE SAME RHYTHM OF TOSS...

AND AS HE DOES THAT, HE BENDS HIS KNEE AND COLLECTS HIS ENERGY IN HIS LOWER BODY...

THE ENERGY TRAVELS LIKE A WHIP FROM THE SHOULDER. IT ACCELERATES THE ELBOW, WRIST, RACKET AND MOVES FURTHER UPWARD...
AND AT THE HIGHEST POINT WHERE THE ACCELERATION IS AT MAX, THERE`S AN...
HUNIMALS
IMPACT!!

AH

THERE ARE STILL THINGS I CAN DO EVEN IF I DON'T HAVE THE HEIGHT ...!!

I TOTALLY DOZED OFF
15 - 0.

BUT THANKS TO ALL THAT THINKING, I WAS ABLE TO SEE TAKUMA-SAN'S SERVE.

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Translator: Auggie
Typesetter: Stark
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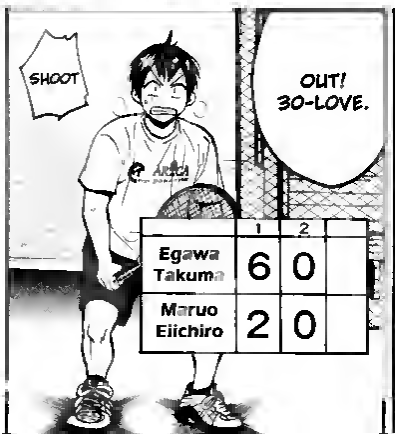
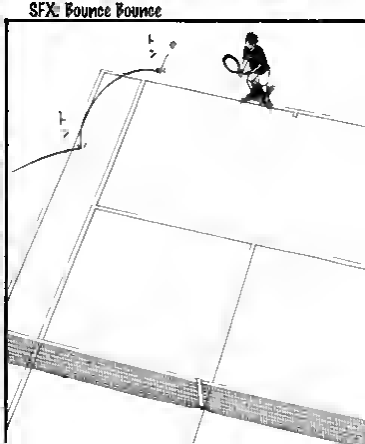
THE ENERGY AMASSES IN HIS LOWER BODY...
PASSES THROUGH HIS SYN-CHRONIZED SHOULDER, ELBOW, AND WRIST IN AN INSTANT!..
AND USING HIS BODY LIKE A WHIP...
IMPACT!!
#97 POWER OF THE SERVE

ARRGH

OH

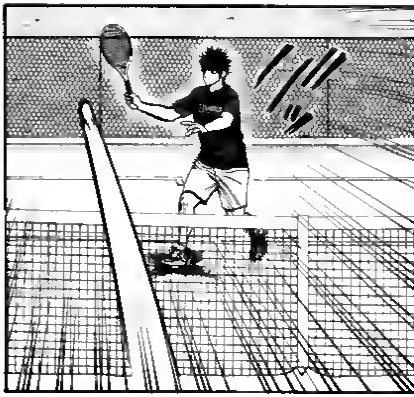
!


SHOOT
OUT!
30-LOVE.
1
2
Egawa Takuma
6
0
Maruo Eiichiro
2
0


SFX: Bounce Bounce

ALTHOUGH IT'S LITTLE BY LITTLE, I'M GETTING CLOSER TO A BREAK-THROUGH!!
MAYBE I'M STARTING TO GET THE TIMING SINCE I'VE BEEN PAYING MORE ATTENTION.
I'M STARTING TO SEE THE FIRST SERVE BETTER THAN BEFORE...
HERE IT COMES!!
SYNCHRO-NIZES LIKE A WHIP...
I HAVE TO WATCH AS IF I'M STEALING HIS FORM.

SFX: Swoy



OUT! 40-LOVE.
THAT'S RIGHT, HE WAS LIKE THIS BACK THEN TOO.
HE STARTED TO MAKE A RETURN
SHOOT... SO CLOSE!!
ALMOST THERE!!
A TOTAL NEWBIE WHO'S ONLY BEEN PLAYING FOR A MONTH...
CAME FIGHTING BACK MY SERVE THAT FAR.
I GOT IT!!

ARCA DONATION

HA
GO IN!!

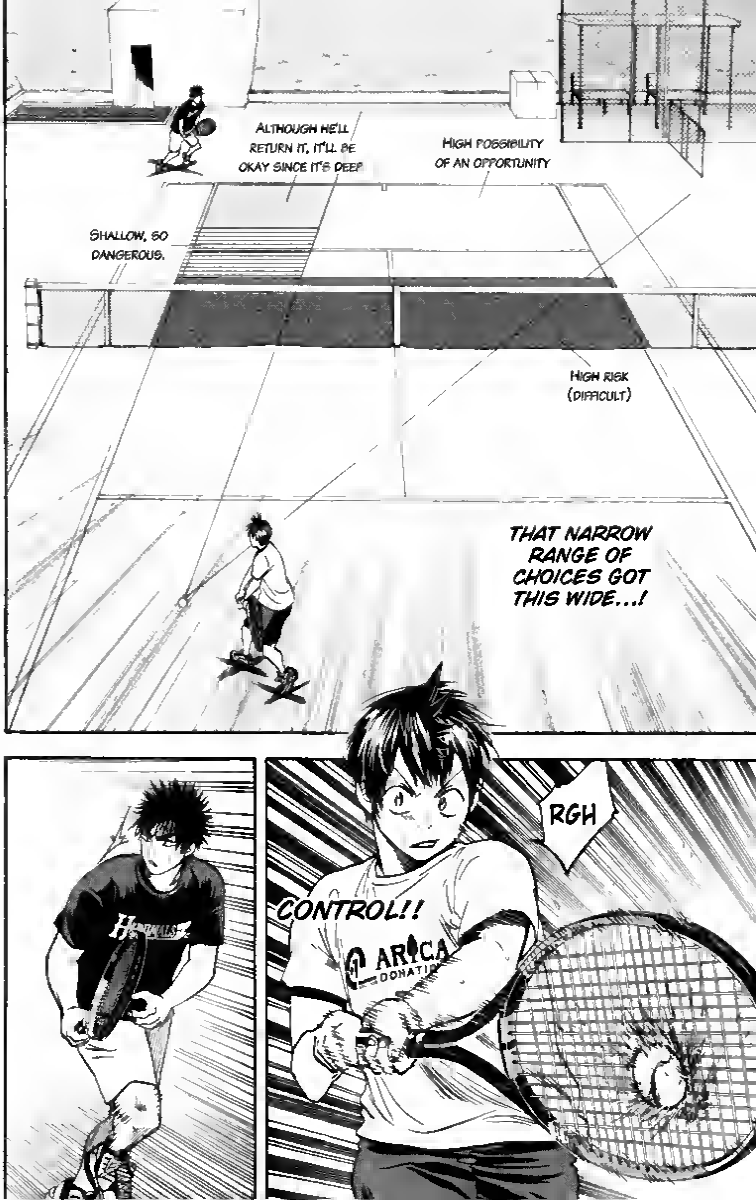
GAME, TAKUMA! 1-0. SECOND SET.
ANIMALS
RGH
ストーン
Drop
NEXT TIME... NEXT TIME, I CAN DEFINITELY MAKE IT!
BEFORE THAT, HERE IT IS...
MY SERVE!!

MAXIMIZE THE FEEDBACK FROM THE DOUBLE FAULTS IN THE FIRST SET...
A FAST SERVE
THAT CAN GIVE ME AN UPPER HAND!!
VISUALIZE HOW I'D SERVE WITH MY BODY...
USING TAKUMA-SAN'S SERVE AS THE MODEL...
ALRIGHT!

SYNCHRONIZE...
THE MOVEMENT...

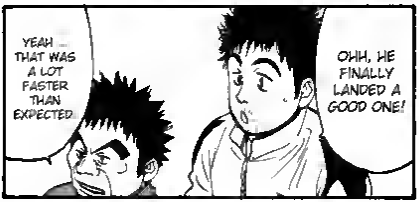
HA

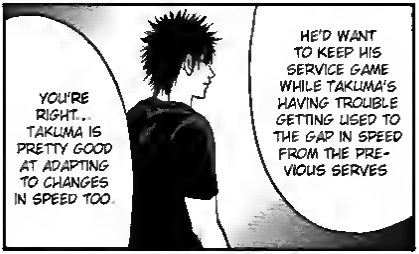
IT WENT IN!!
!
FAST!
IT'S WEAK!


ALTHOUGH HE'LL RETURN IT, IT'LL BE OKAY SINCE IT'S DEEP.
HIGH POSSIBILITY OF AN OPPORTUNITY
SHALLOW, SO DANGEROUS.
HIGH RISK (DIFFICULT)
THAT NARROW RANGE OF CHOICES GOT THIS WIDE...!
RGH
CONTROL!!

15-0
ALRIGHT!!

I FINALLY MADE IT IN!!
BUT I CAN STILL GO EVEN FURTHER..!!
IT'S STILL NOT PERFECT YET!!


YEAH... THAT WAS A LOT FASTER THAN EXPECTED.
OHH, HE FINALLY LANDED A GOOD ONE!


YOU'RE RIGHT.. TAKUMA IS PRETTY GOOD AT ADAPTING TO CHANGES IN SPEED TOO.
HE'D WANT TO KEEP HIS SERVICE GAME WHILE TAKUMA'S HAVING TROUBLE GETTING USED TO THE GAP IN SPEED FROM THE PREVIOUS SERVES

AS FOR THE ENERGY GATHERED ON MY LOWER BODY,
UNLIKE A REAL WHIP, ONLY MY JOINTS CAN BEND SO I SHOULDN'T PUT TOO MUCH FORCE ON MY SHOULDERS AND MAKE MY BODY STIFF.
SINCE I'M SMALLER THAN TAKUMA-SAN, I GOT TO USE MY BODY EVEN BETTER...
AND LIKE A WHIP...
SYNCHRONIZE SMOOTHLY WITH AS LITTLE FORCE ON MY SHOULDER AS POSSIBLE.
HA

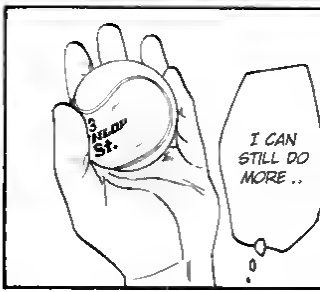
NOT BAD USING THE SAME IMAGE FOR THE SECOND SERVE..
WITH A STRONG SPIN!!

THAT'S... HE'LL HIT DOWN THE LINE!!
AH...
ALRIGHT.. LOOKING GOOD!!

15-15
SO CLOSE.
BUT HIS POWER SHOT WAS WEAKER THAN BEFORE.
IT'S BECAUSE I'M GETTING THE UPPER HAND ON THE RALLIES.
BY FIGHTING BACK ON THE SERVE.
MY GAME CHANGED THIS MUCH JUST WITH THE SERVE!!

...
INTERESTING...

EVEN THIS MATCH... I CAN DEFINITELY TURN IT AROUND!!


3 Field St.
I CAN STILL DO MORE ..

MY SERVE CAN GET EVEN FASTER. .

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# Baby Steps

ベイビーステップ

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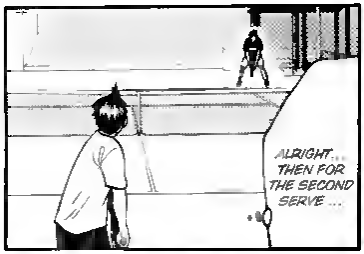
A FASTER SERVE...!!
NOT JUST SHOULDER, ELBOW, AND WRIST, I HAVE TO SYNCHRONIZE MY WAIST TOO...
MOVE MY ENTIRE BODY, LIKE A LIKE A BIG WHIP...

#98 ANALYSIS ABILITY

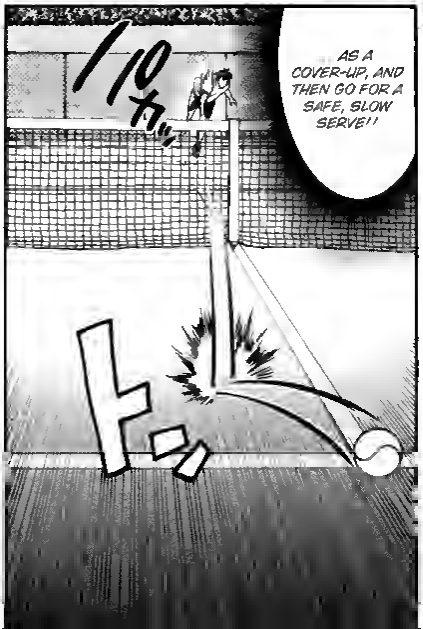
HAA
ドド

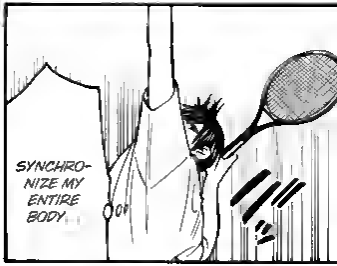
IT WENT IN!!
30 - 15
ALRIGHT!!
WITH JUST A SINGLE SHOT USING SPEED, I SCORED A POINT AGAINST TAKUMA-SAN
THAT WAS A POINT I EARNED JUST WITH MY SERVE

I HAVE TO COLLECT MORE DATA ON THE SERVES I MAKE AND INCREASE THE ACCURACY.
BUT... MY ACCURACY ON THE FIRST SERVE IS STILL LOW...


ALRIGHT... THEN FOR THE SECOND SERVE...

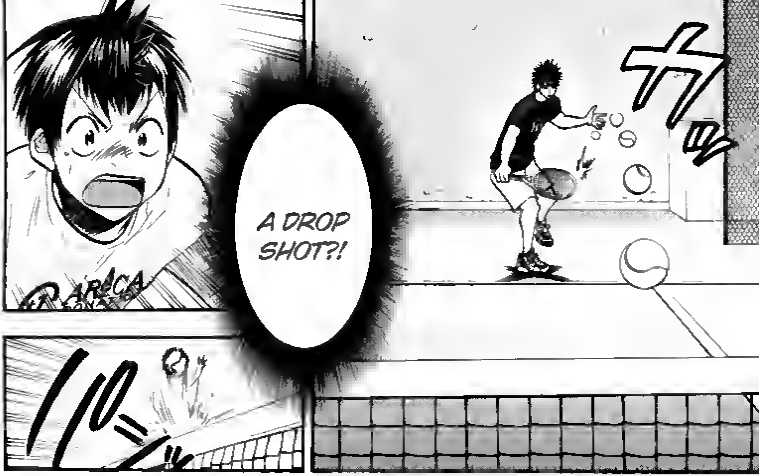
SCRATCH

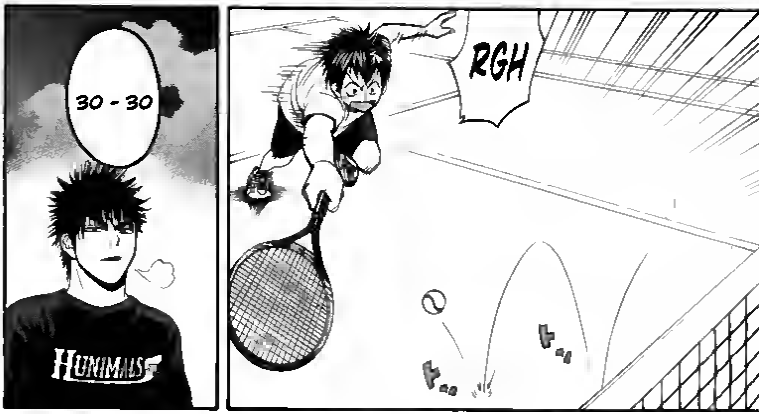

AS A COVER-UP, AND THEN GO FOR A SAFE, SLOW SERVE!!

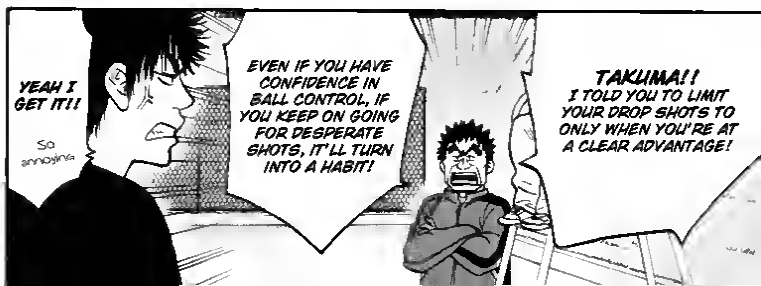

SYNCHRONIZE MY ENTIRE BODY...

AND GO FOR A STRONG SPIN.
ARMCA

ALRIGHT! HE MESSED UP HIS TIMING!
MY FAST SERVES...RE WORKING SO FAR!!
!
OH!
!
DOWN THE LINE?!
HA
DONATION


A DROP SHOT?!


30 - 30
RGH


YEAH I GET IT!!
So annoying
EVEN IF YOU HAVE CONFIDENCE IN BALL CONTROL, IF YOU KEEP ON GOING FOR DESPERATE SHOTS, IT'LL TURN INTO A HABIT!
TAKUMA!! I TOLD YOU TO LIMIT YOUR DROP SHOTS TO ONLY WHEN YOU'RE AT A CLEAR ADVANTAGE!

I CAN DO IT!!
ALTHOUGH IT WAS AN INCREDIBLE SHOT, HE WAS RUNNING OUT OF OPTIONS...
I KNEW IT...
IF I CAN KEEP THIS GAME...
IT'S PROOF THAT I'M AT A CLEAR ADVANTAGE DURING MY SERVES...!!
NEXT IS A FAST SERVE...

STOP A SECOND!!

HUH?
!....
UNIMALS

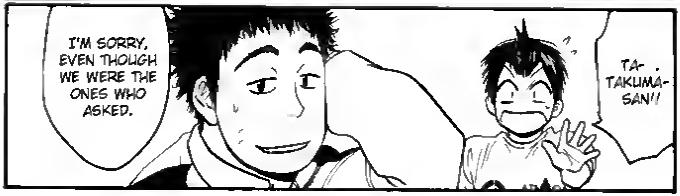
LET'S STOP THE MATCH RIGHT HERE.
UMM... I'M REALLY SORRY, BUT ...
I TOLD YOU, I'M REALLY SORRY... BUT PLEASE STOP, OR MORE LIKE SUSPEND THE GAME...
AR-ARE YOU SERIOUS?!
ERR... UMM... WHAT ARE YOU SAYING ALL OF A SUDDEN?
HUH?
.....
TH-THIS IS NO JOKE!! I WAS JUST GETTING STARTED!!
WHAT'S THE REASON?!
PLEASE EX-PLAIN TO ME PROPERLY!!
YOU'RE RIGHT... LET'S SEE... YOU SEE...

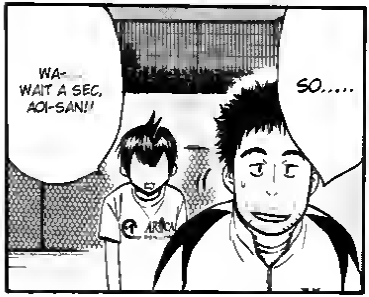
HUH...
IF YOU KEEP ON PLAYING LIKE THIS...
THERE'S A DANGER OF YOU GETTING INJURED.
...
W-WHERE I... SIR?
I'M NOT FEELING PAIN OR ANYTHING!
WELL, THAT'S BE-CAUSE YOU DIDN'T HURT ANYWHERE YET
THEN PLEASE LET ME PLAY THIS MATCH TO THE END!!
IF I FEEL ANYTHING WRONG, I'LL TELL YOU RIGHT AWAY!!
I LEARNED IN FLORIDA HOW MUCH I NEED TO TAKE CARE OF MY BODY!!
バカ野郎!!

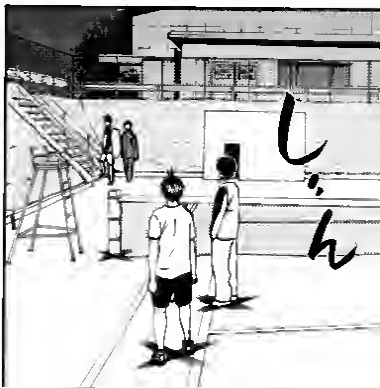
NO... YOU DON'T GET IT ALL.
YOU'RE SAYING THAT BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.
SORRY, BUT I'M NOT ASKING FOR YOUR OPINION.
I'M ORDERING YOU AS THE COACH.
!!
TAKUMA-SAN!!
IT CAN'T BE HELPED IF AOI-SAN SAYS SO.
!?

WE'LL CONTINUE THIS ANY-TIME YOU WANT.
I DON'T FEEL THAT GREAT EITHER.
HEAD
HEAD
IM

AND IT'S A SUSPENSION NOT AN END.


I'M SORRY, EVEN THOUGH WE WERE THE ONES WHO ASKED.
TA- TAKUMA-SAN!!

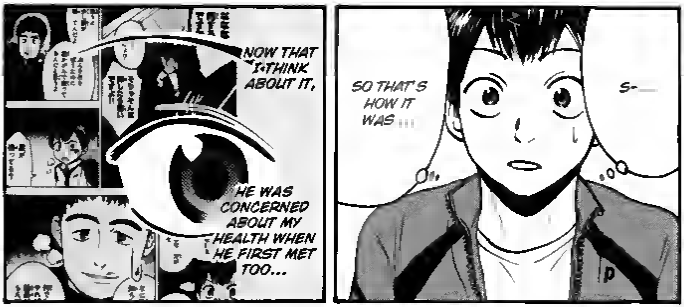

WA- WAIT A SEC, AOI-SAN!!
SO.....


し、ん

BUT I DIDN'T IMAGINE YOU WOULD
ALL I WANTED IN THIS MATCH WAS FOR YOU TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE "IMPORTANCE OF A FAST SERVE".
NOT ONLY REALIZE HOW TO HIT A FAST SERVE, BUT DEVELOP IT UP TO THIS LEVEL.
IF... IF IT WAS GOING TO END UP LIKE THIS... WHY DID YOU TELL ME TO PLAY AGAINST TAKUMA-SAN?!!
HOW'RE YOU GONNA MAKE UP FOR THIS?
E-... EVEN I DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS GOING TO TURN OUT LIKE THIS!!
THAT'S WHY I'VE BEEN APOLOGIZING OVER AND OVER
IT WAS MY MISTAKE FOR UNDERESTIMATING YOUR ANALYSIS ABILITY
YOU NEED TO HAVE A FAIR LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND PHYSICAL TRAINING.
IN OTHER WORDS, FOR SOMEONE LIKE YOU TO HIT A FAST SERVE,

WAIST, SHOULDER, ELBOW OR WRIST. YOU DEFINITELY WOULD'VE INJURED ONE OF THEM.
THEN... WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF I KEPT ON PLAYING LIKE THIS?
THEY'RE ALL PLACES I'VE BEEN PAYING PARTICULAR ATTENTION...
H-HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT SO DISTINCTLY?
I KNOW A TENNIS PLAYER'S BODY WAY MORE THAN I WOULD LIKE.
...

I WAS FIGHTING AGAINST INJURIES DURING MY ENTIRE PROFESSIONAL LIFE...
AND I ENDED UP RETIRING BECAUSE OF THAT.


NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT,
HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT MY HEALTH WHEN HE FIRST MET TOO...
SO THAT'S HOW IT WAS...!!
S-

AH... YES...
THEN LET'S GO BEFORE YOUR BODY GETS COLD.

I'LL BE FRANK. YOU'RE STILL NO MATCH FOR TAKUMA YET.
...
ARGH
AND BECAUSE OF THAT, THE ACCURACY OF YOUR FIRST SERVE WILL DROP EVEN MORE SOMETIME IN THE SECOND SET.
FIRST OF ALL, THE ACCURACY OF YOUR FAST SERVE IS STILL TOO LOW.
THE MORE THEY MISS, THE MORE YOU'LL HAVE TO KEEP ON SERVING, SO YOUR BODY WILL BE UNDER EVEN MORE STRESS.
BUT STILL
BUT THERE WAS A DISCOVERY
IT'LL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO GO THAT FAR IN THIS ONE MATCH EVEN FOR YOU.
THERE'S NO POINT IF YOU CAN'T HIT MULTIPLE BALLS IN VARIOUS DIRECTIONS AT HIGH ACCURACY.
IT'LL BE A DECENT MATCH IF YOUR SERVES GO IN BY CHANCE, BUT TAKUMA WILL GET USED TO THE SPEED EVENTUALLY.

ALTHOUGH YOU HAVE AN AVERAGE BODY FOR A TENNIS PLAYER,
YOUR BODY IS CAPABLE OF HITTING SPEED SERVES.
DEPENDING ON HOW YOU TRAIN, YOUR SERVE CAN EVOLVE EVEN FURTHER.
RE-.... REALLY SIR?!
WHY WOULD I LIE?

THEN LET'S START THE SPECIAL SERVE TRAINING FOR CONQUERING THE NATIONALS.
I... CAN GET EVEN STRONGER!!
YES!!

TAKUMA SMILES
QUITE OFTEN WHILE
HE'S AROUND
NATSU

imangascans.org

imangascans
rc.rchighway.net

# Baby Steps

ベイビーステップ

RAWs: Share

Cleaner: Stark

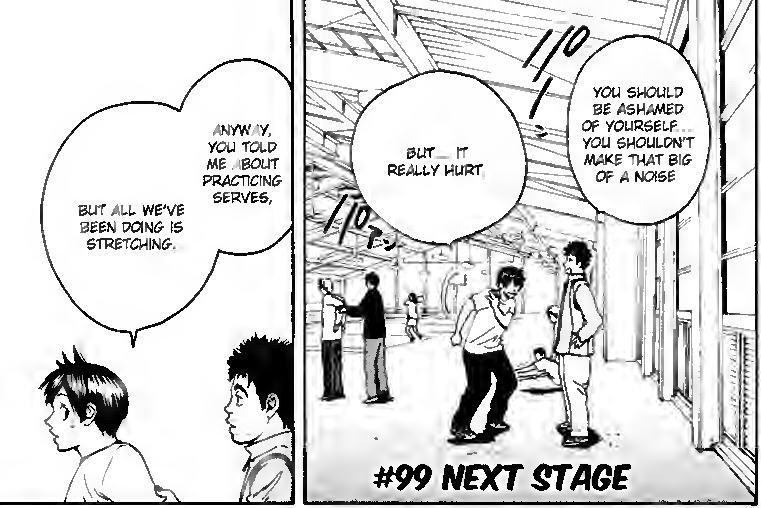
Translator: Auggie

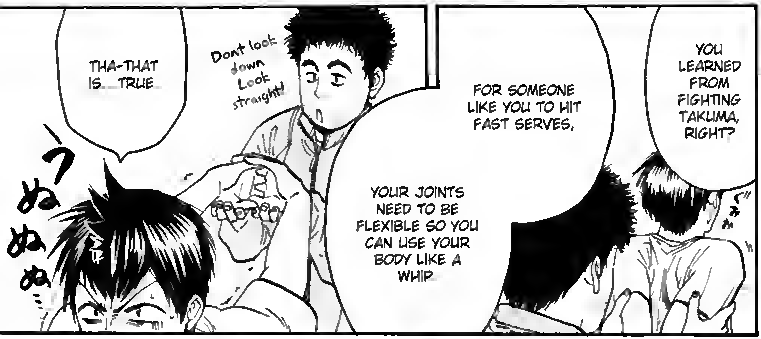
Typesetter: Busaway

Proofreader: DeadlyFang

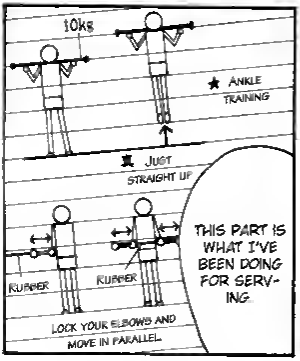
Q-Checker: ilikefood

HO-HO~
OUCH HHH-HHH-HHH
RE-REALLY... ARE YOU... SURE
AREN'T YOU FLEXIBLE. AS EXPECTED OF YOUR DAILY STRETCHES.
RGHH-HHHH-HHHH-HHHH!!


ANYWAY, YOU TOLD ME ABOUT PRACTICING SERVES,
BUT ALL WE'VE BEEN DOING IS STRETCHING.
BUT... IT REALLY HURT.
YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF... YOU SHOULDN'T MAKE THAT BIG OF A NOISE
#99 NEXT STAGE

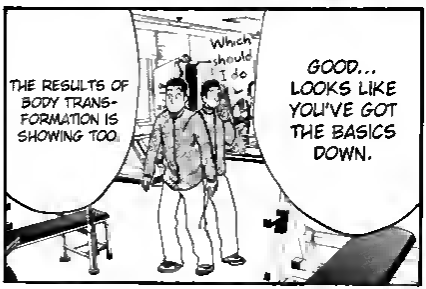

THA-THAT IS... TRUE.
Don't look down. Look straight!
うぬぬぬ
FOR SOMEONE LIKE YOU TO HIT FAST SERVES,
YOUR JOINTS NEED TO BE FLEXIBLE SO YOU CAN USE YOUR BODY LIKE A WHIP.
YOU LEARNED FROM FIGHTING TAKUMA, RIGHT?
ふぁ

!
THEN SHALL WE MOVE ON TO THE NEXT STEP?
ALRIGHT!


10kg
★ ANKLE TRAINING
JUST STRAIGHT UP
KUPPER
KUPPER
LOCK YOUR ELBOWS AND MOVE IN PARALLEL.
THIS PART IS WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING FOR SERVING.

AH... YES.
I SEE... SO THIS IS YOUR WEIGHT TRAINING SO FAR.
テニス II

THEN IT SHOULD BE FINE.

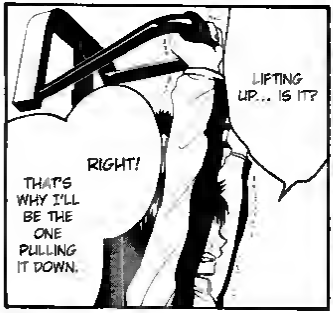

THE RESULTS OF BODY TRANSFORMATION IS SHOWING TOO.
Which should I do
GOOD... LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT THE BASICS DOWN.

OKAY
ALRIGHT, FIRST IS THIS.
OVERHEAD PRESS
PRIMARILY FOR BUILDING MUSCLE AROUND UPPER ARM AND SHOULDERS.
THEN TAKE FOUR SECONDS... TO BRING IT DOWN SLOWLY
LIFT UP... IN TWO SECONDS
THEN FROM NOW ON, LET'S GO WITH MUSCLE TRAINING SPECIALIZED FOR SERVES.
SPECIALIZED...?
YUP. JUST LIKE IN THE TEXTBOOK.
OKAY..

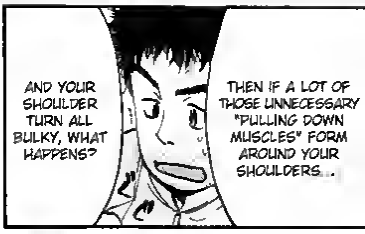
OKAY! LIFT UP IN ONE GO.
HUH...IN ONE GO?
RGH!!
ガシャン
TOO SLOW! FASTER!
ONCE IT'S ALL THE WAY UP, HOLD IT RIGHT THERE.
THEN YOU CAN LET IT GO.
HUH?
IF I LET IT GO NOW .. IT'S GOING TO FALL
ぐっ
I'M PULLING IT BACK.
DON'T WORRY .. I'VE GOT IT.

OKAY, LET IT GO.
UMM... WHAT EXACTLY IS THIS?
LIFT IT UP AGAIN.
FASTER!
RGH!
THE TYPE OF MUSCLE YOU GET FROM LIFTING WEIGHTS DEPEND ON HOW FAST YOU LIFT THEM.
WHICH DO YOU THINK IS MORE IMPORTANT FOR SERVING?
YUP!
THAT'S WHY YOU LIFT UP QUICKLY!
IS IT . ONE FOR LIFTING UP QUICKLY?

RGH
ALSO... MUSCLES FOR LIFTING AND MUSCLES FOR PULLING DOWN HAVE DIFFERENT LOCATIONS
WHICH IS THE ONE YOU NEED?


LIFTING UP... IS IT?
RIGHT!
THAT'S WHY I'LL BE THE ONE PULLING IT DOWN.

U~~~M.. WHAT SHOULD I SAY.
IT TURNS DISGUSTING
Is it?
THAT'S NOT IT.


AND YOUR SHOULDER TURN ALL BULKY, WHAT HAPPENS?
THEN IF A LOT OF THOSE UNNECESSARY "PULLING DOWN MUSCLES" FORM AROUND YOUR SHOULDERS...

BULKY?

AT THE SAME TIME, MAKE YOUR JOINTS AS FLEXIBLE AS POSSIBLE THROUGH STRETCHING,
AND MAKE SURE THAT THE MUSCLES HAVE A WIDE RANGE OF MOTION.
IT'S LIKE WIDENING THE RANGE OF YOUR WHIP.
WIDE
NARROW
FLEXIBLE
STIFF
THOSE UNNECESSARY MUSCLES WILL HINDER THE MOVEMENT OF YOUR JOINTS
THEN IT'LL ALL BE FOR NOTHING NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU STRETCH YOUR MUSCLES RIGHT?
THAT'S WHY THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO HAVE THE RIGHT TYPE OF MUSCLE AT THE RIGHT PLACE AND RIGHT AMOUNT.
HAVE THE RIGHT QUALITY MUSCLE AND INCREASE ITS RANGE OF MOTION...

I- I NEVER HEARD OF THIS EVEN IN FLORIDA.
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.. THAT'S WHY I'M TEACHING YOU.
AREN'T YOU THINKING THAT STC FALLS BEHIND AMERICA?
THE REASON WE DON'T HAVE VIDEO FACILITIES IN EVERY COURT IS BECAUSE WE DON'T HAVE MONEY
WE ALWAYS LEND YOU GUYS OUR CAMERAS WHENEVER YOU ASK, RIGHT?
IF YOU'RE THINKING THEY'RE AHEAD OF US ON EVERYTHING,
THEN YOU'RE WRONG!!

OKAY, LIFT QUICKLY!
YES!
EVEN IF I DON'T HAVE NATURAL BORN PHYSIQUE OR POWER, USING CONTROL FOR STROKES...
AND GOOD USE OF BODY AND EFFECTIVE TRAINING FOR SERVES...
I SHOULD BE ABLE TO COVER FOR MY LACK OF TALENT...
TWO MONTHS LEFT TILL THE REGIONAL QUALIFIER FOR ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR.
ALL THAT'S LEFT IS HOW FAR I CAN GO WITH THIS.

I WAS IN OOSAKA,
ONE WEEK LATER,

FOR SPYING THE ALL JAPAN JUNIOR INDOOR SELECTIONAL THAT I DROPPED OUT AT KANTO REGIONAL.

OHHH
IT'S THE TENNIS COUNTERPART OF SPRING SENBATSU*
THIS COMPETITION SELECTS THE NO. 1 OF JAPAN AMONGST THE 32 PLAYERS FROM EACH GENDER WHO ADVANCED FROM EACH REGION.

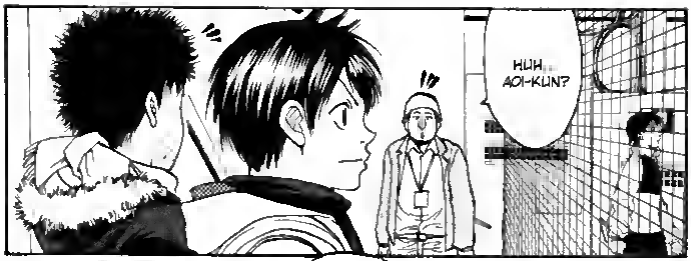
*TL NOTE: Refers to National High School Baseball Invitational Tournament, which is Japan's high school baseball tournament that happens in Spring (similar to Koshien, which happens in SUMMER)

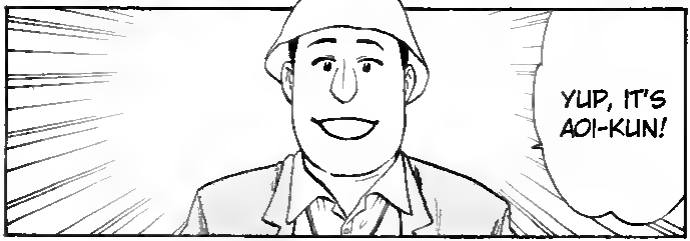
HAAA
ARAYA'S BEEN GETTING BETTER AND BETTER SINCE LAST YEAR!!
AND NOISY AS USUAL.
OKADA'S MATCH STARTED TOO! HE'S THE ONE WHO BEAT ARAYA IN THE KANTO REGIONAL!
THIS YEAR'S KANTO PLAYERS ARE STRONG AS USUAL.

カキカキカキカキカキ
THE ACCURACY OF OKADA-KUN'S RISING INCREASED FROM BEFORE EVEN THOUGH THE TEMPO GOT FASTER. THIS MEANS...
カキカキカキカキカキカキ
TAKING NOTES EVEN ON A COMPLETION YOU LOST IN THE QUALIFIER YOU SURE HAVE WEIRD TASTES.
あ。
OH THIS PERSON'S NOT PLAYING.
CONTENT OF THE NOTES CHANGES AS TIME PASSES,
AND MY STRATEGIES CHANGE TOO.

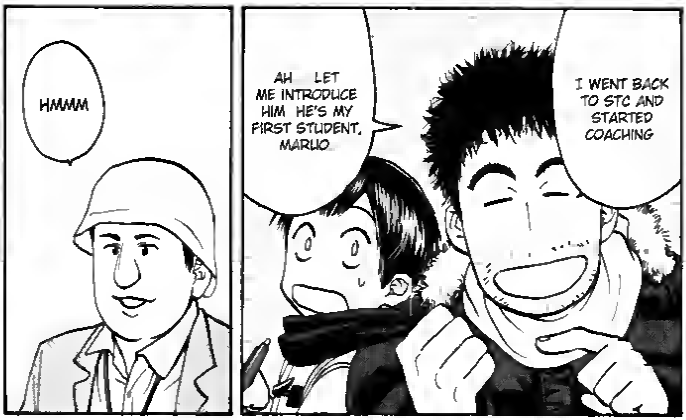
HA
IF I BECOME ABLE TO HIT A FASTER SERVE...
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO SUPPRESS OKADA-KUN'S RISING SHOT TO THE BARE MINIMUM ...
SINCE I WON'T BE RECEIVING THAT SORT OF A COUNTER FROM THE START, I'LL ACQUIRE A WIDER VARIETY OF ATTACK.
ALSO AGAINST IDE-KUN'S MENTAL STRENGTH,
EVEN FOR KANDA-KUN'S FOOTWORK...
THERE'LL BE GREATER CHANCES OF ATTACK...

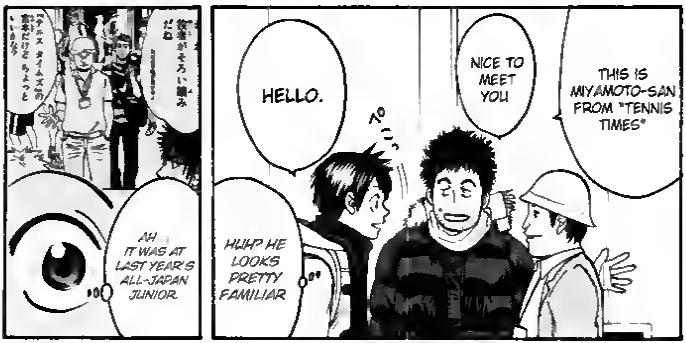
IF THAT HAPPENS, I CAN TAKE CHANCES DURING MY RETURN GAMES LIKE TAKUMA-SAN.
WHICH ATTACK IS BEST FOR TAKING RISKS
I GOT TO SIMULATE AS MANY DIFFERENT PATTERNS AS POSSIBLE.


HUH... AOI-KUN?


YUP, IT'S AOI-KUN!

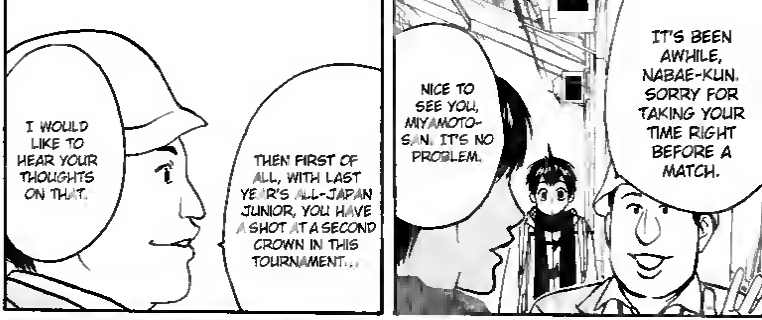
OH~ MIYAMOTO-SAN, LONG TIME NO SEE.
HAVEN'T SEEN YOU SINCE YOU RETIRED, SO HAS IT BEEN TWO YEARS?
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I DIDN'T GET TO SEE YOU AT ALL THESE DAYS,
BUT HOW ARE YOU?


I WENT BACK TO STC AND STARTED COACHING
AH LET ME INTRODUCE HIM HE'S MY FIRST STUDENT, MARUO.
HMMM


THIS IS MIYAMOTO-SAN FROM "TENNIS TIMES"
NICE TO MEET YOU
HELLO.
HUH? HE LOOKS PRETTY FAMILIAR
AH IT WAS AT LAST YEAR'S ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR

I CAN'T IMAGINE YOU BEING A COACH AT ALL.
あはははは
C'MON, MIYAMOTO-SAN.
ザワッ
AH, HE'S HERE!
ザワ
ザワ
ザワ
IT'S NABAE-KUN ...!!

THE ENTIRE PLACE WAS SILENCED FOR A SECOND.
OH, HERE COMES THE PROSPECTIVE CHAMPION.
ミ
すま
にっ
AHH, GO AHEAD, GO AHEAD...
I HAVE A TIME APPOINTED WITH HIM.
THEN EXCUSE ME FOR A BIT...

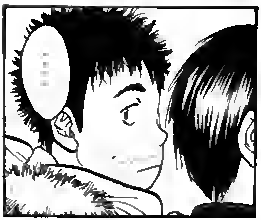

IT'S BEEN AWHILE, NABAE-KUN. SORRY FOR TAKING YOUR TIME RIGHT BEFORE A MATCH.
NICE TO SEE YOU, MIYAMOTO-SAN. IT'S NO PROBLEM.
THEN FIRST OF ALL, WITH LAST YEAR'S ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR, YOU HAVE A SHOT AT A SECOND CROWN IN THIS TOURNAMENT...
I WOULD LIKE TO HEAR YOUR THOUGHTS ON THAT.

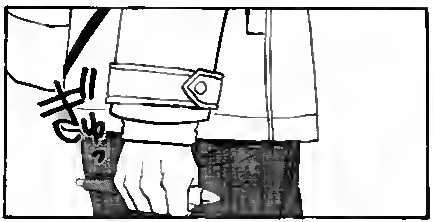
I PLAN ON DOING WHAT I CAN AS USUAL.
HMM, HMM. YOU SEEM PRETTY RELAXED.

DOES THAT MEAN... YOU'RE CONSIDERING A MOVE TO THE PROS?

IF I BECOME ABLE TO REALIZE MY IDEAL TENNIS,
I BELIEVE THAT WILL HAPPEN EVENTUALLY.
SO HE MEANS HE'LL GO PRO....
ONCE ONCE HE SUCCEEDS IN ACHIEVING THE ALL-A-TENNIS.
SEEMS LIKE BECOMING A PRO IS MORE OF A CHECK-POINT THAT'S ON HIS PATH RATHER THAN A GOAL FOR HIM.
BECAUSE HIS BATTLE WITH HIMSELF IS ON A MUCH HIGHER LEVEL THAN HIS BATTLE WITH HIS OPPONENTS, HE HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO BECOME A PRO.
AN ELITE AMONG THE ELITE WHO'S BEEN BLESSED WITH NATURAL TALENT AND GOOD ENVIRONMENT EVER SINCE HE WAS LITTLE.
IT'S SUCH A CONTRAST COMPARED TO YOU WHO'S DESPERATE IN BECOMING A PRO.

BUT...
I CAN'T BECOME A PRO
UNLESS I DEFEAT HIM.




ぎゅっ

YOU FOOL!
THERE'S NO POINT GETTING ALL NERVOUS THIS EARLY.
WAH

110
NO ONE HERE'S THINKING THAT YOU'LL BE A FORMIDABLE OPPONENT.
NOT EVEN A SINGLE BIT.
I...
I KNOW THAT ALREADY.
FOR NOW... AT LEAST.
BUT IT'S SOON, RIGHT?

WE'LL MAKE EVERY-ONE
LOOK BACK IN AWE.

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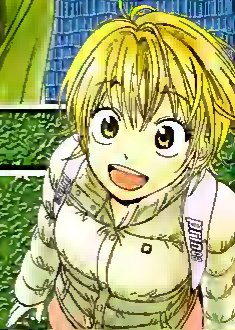
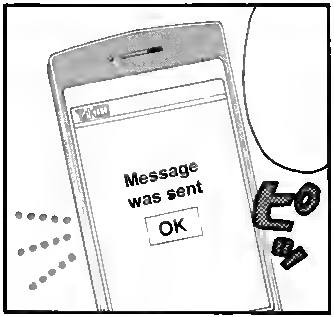
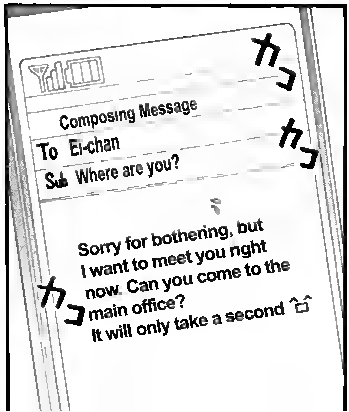
# Baby Steps

ベイビーステップ

RAWs: Share
Cleaner: Michalv (color)
Translator: Auggia
Typesetter: Busaway
Proofreader: DeadlyFang
Q-Checker: ilikefood Stark







Composing Message
To Ei-chan
Sub Where are you?
Sorry for bothering, but I want to meet you nght now. Can you come to the main office?
It will only take a second
カコ
カコ
カコ

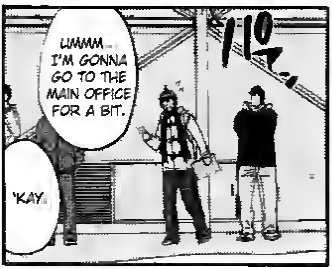
# #100 OVERCOME A WALL

I'M GOING TO GET SOMETHING TO DRINK.
OKAY... IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR YOUR MATCH, SO BE QUICK.
YES SIR~!
GEEZ, WHAT'S SHE UP TO NOW...?
タッタッ

NACCHAN? WHAT IS IT...?

BRRRRR BRRRR BRRRR BRRRR

IS THE REASON SHE CAN SAY "I WANNA MEET YOU" SO SO EASILY IS BE-CAUSE SHE'S AN AIRHEAD..?

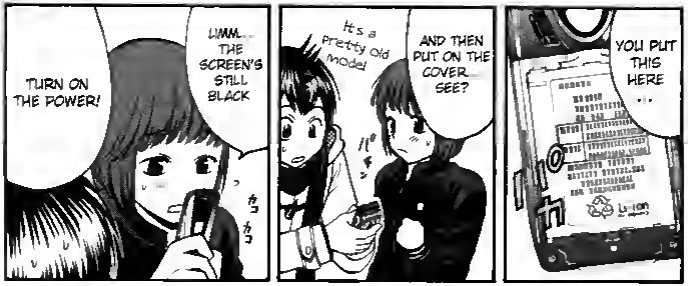

UMMM... I'M GONNA GO TO THE MAIN OFFICE FOR A BIT.
'KAY.

LET'S SEE... WHICH WAY WAS THE MAIN OFFICE?

AAA
AA
KYA
AH... SORRY!!
ドン
EH...AH... NO, IT'S MY FAULT. I'M SO SORRY.
HMMM .? A CELL-PHONE BATTERY?

AH... IT'S OFF.
H-HUH!? IT'S REALLY DENTED FOR SOME REASON!!
UMMMM, EXCUSE ME

EH...? AH...YES.
ビクッ
UMM... YOU DROPPED THIS.
ACTUALLY... THAT'S NOT A DENT AT ALL!


UMM... THE SCREEN'S STILL BLACK
TURN ON THE POWER!
カチカチ
AND THEN PUT ON THE COVER... SEE?
It's a pretty old model
YOU PUT THIS HERE...

S-S-SORRY, I... DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT CELL PHONES AND STUFF...!!
THAT'S PRETTY RARE FOR OUR AGE...

...AH IT'S ON!

UMM... THANK YOU SO MUCH.
I WANTED TO CONTACT MY MOM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, SO...
NOT AT ALL.
SHE'S A BIT STRANGE.
AH... EI-CHAN?
AH... NACCHAN! I WAS JUST ABOUT TO HEAD THERE.

HUH?
IT'S SHIMIZU-SAN ...
HELLO~
ペコッ
AH . HOW DO YOU DO
HUH? NACCHAN YOU KNOW HER?
YUP. SHIMIZU AKI-CHAN, RIGHT?
OF COURSE I KNOW HER. SHE'S THE NUMBER ONE SEED IN THE FEMALE COMPE-TITION.

EH...?! TH-THE NO.1 SEED?!
YOU'RE KIDDIN' ME, RIGHT?
HMM... EXCUSE ME. I'LL BE GOING THEN.
THANK YOU SO MUCH.
YEAH. I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE FEMALE SIDE.
YOU REALLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT SHIMIZU-SAN?

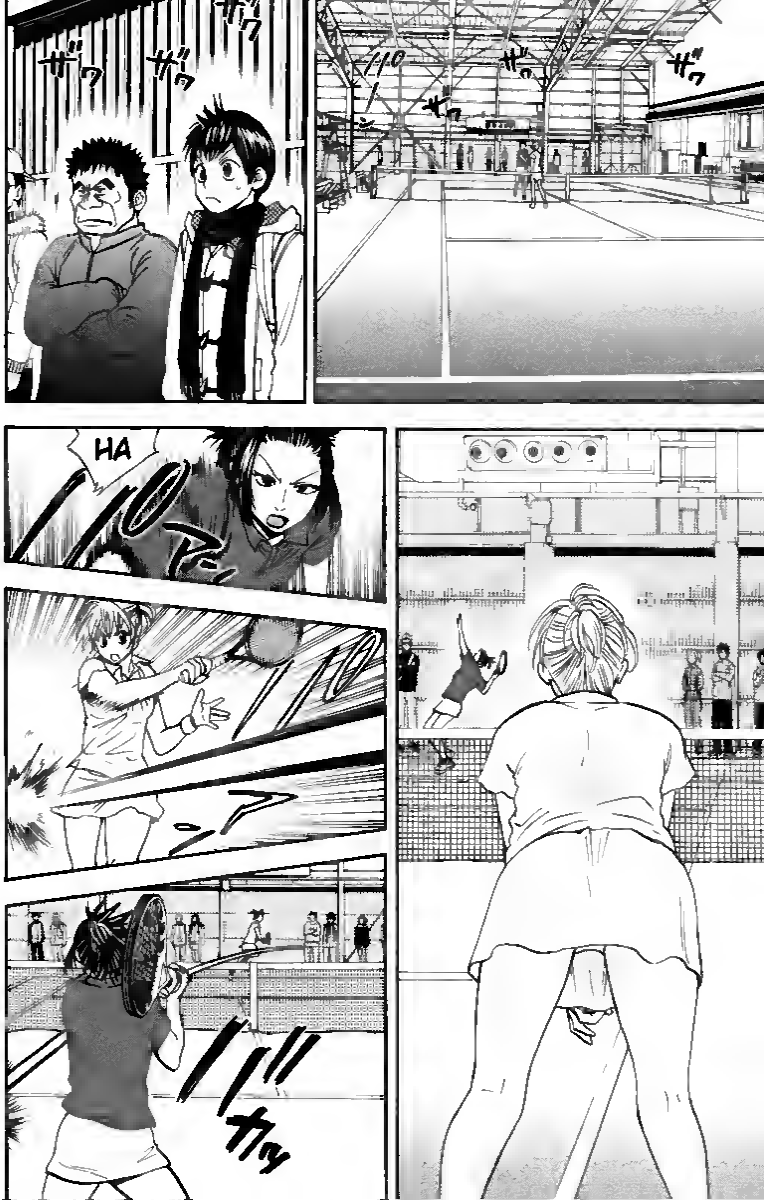
!!
I MEAN, SHE WON THE ALL JAPAN JUNIOR LAST YEAR AS A FRESHMEN!
SHE'S SUPER-STRONG!
...THAT MEANS SHE'S STRONG HUH.
DOES THAT MEAN SHE'S NO GOOD FOR ANYTHING OTHER THAN TENNIS?
H-HUH?! IT'S REALLY DENTED FOR SOME REASON!!
THEY EVEN SAY HER SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS KEPT AT A BARE MINIMUM SO SHE CAN PLAY TENNIS
SHE'S BEEN AIMING TO BE A PRO EVER SINCE SHE WAS LITTLE WITH HER MOM AS A COACH SHE'S BEEN SUPER STRONG FOR A LONG TIME.

NACCHAN LOST ALL FOUR MATCHES!!
I'VE BEEN AGAINST HER FOUR TIMES IN THE PAST THREE YEARS, BUT I HAVEN'T WON A SINGLE TIME.

AND... IF I CAN, I WANNA BEAT HER AT LEAST ONCE BEFORE I BECOME A PRO.
SINCE I'LL BE UP AGAINST HER IN THE SEMI-FINALS IF I KEEP ON WINNING, I WANT TO GO AT LEAST THAT FAR.
BUT I THINK OUR GAP'S BEEN GETTING SMALLER RECENTLY
NACCHAN HAD AN OPPONENT LIKE NABAE-KUN TOO.
I HAD NO IDEA...
THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT!!
HMM... SHE IS PRETTY CUTE.
AH... YEAH I HELPED HER PUT IN THE BATTERY FOR HER CELL PHONE.
BY THE WAY, WHY WERE YOU TALKING WITH SHIMIZU-SAN JUST NOW?

I KNOW YOU'RE BUSY EI-CHAN, BUT.....
I WAS WONDERING IF YOU COULD COME WATCH MY MATCH FOR A BIT.
ANYWAY, YOU TEXTED ME, RIGHT?
What's wrong?
YEAH, YEAH ABOUT THAT.
Incoming Message
From: Nacchan
Where are you?
Sorry for bothering, but I want to meet you right now. Can you come to the main office?
It will only take a second! Ack!
ONLY A FEW GAMES WILL DO, SO.. PLEASE!!
JUST AT THE VERY BEGINNING. ONLY FOR A LITTLE WHILE..
EHHH?! THAT'S NO GOOD.
OKAY, THEN I'LL GO BY THE TIME THE SECOND SET STARTS.
YES! THANK YOU!!
OKAY, I'LL GO.
DON'T THINK IT'S A GIVEN FOR A NO.1 SEED TO WIN.
PLEASE CHEER ME ON PROPERLY
I SEE... SO SHE STILL HASN'T OVERCOME HER FEAR OF FIRST MATCHES.

BUT I HAVE TO WATCH A BUNCH OF OTHER MATCHES, SO IT'LL REALLY ONLY BE FOR THE FIRST FEW GAMES.
I ALSO HAVE TO GET BACK TO TOKYO WITHIN THE DAY.
NO PROBLEM. I'M JUST WORRIED ABOUT THE START.
SINCE EI-CHAN'S THE ONLY ONE WHO UNDERSTANDS ME ON THESE SORTS OF THINGS,
JUST BEING THERE WILL HELP ME RELAX...
SO... I'LL BE FINE.
WOW... SHE REALLY BELIEVES SHE'LL BE FINE...
よーし
HEAD
THEN I'M HEADING OFF.


HA

HA
アー
おお
AL-
RIGHT.
LOVE - 15
おおお

YUP... LOOKS LIKE SHE MANAGED TO START OFF PRETTY WELL.
THAT'S IT AKI! YOU'RE DOING GREAT!!
AKI... THAT'S SHIMIZU-SAN.
DOES THAT MEAN SHE'S HER MOM?
POW

SHE'S LIKE... A MACHINE!!
THERE'S NO WASTE IN HER MOVEMENT... AND IT'S FAST... AND ACCURATE...
AMAZING...
WOW..

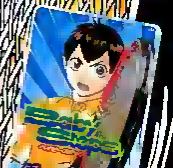
JUST LIKE ME... A HUGE WALL THAT SHE ABSOLUTELY WANTS TO OVER-COME

I WANNA BEAT HER AT LEAST ONCE BEFORE I BECOME A PRO.

2本立て合計45P!!
巻頭&センター
超PUSH
Wカラー!!

全巻大増刷完了!!
最新第7巻絶好調!!

譲れない戦いへ‥



オリジナルQUOカードを抽選で100名にプレゼント!!

ご希望の方はハガキに1住所 2氏名 3職業(学年) 4電話番号 5好きなキャラクターを 6ベイビーステップの感想をお書きの上、〒190-8181 東京小石川郵便局 私書箱 5号 ベイビーステッププレゼント係 までお送りください。しめきり5月20日(水)消印有効です。当選者の発表は賞品の発送をもってかえさせていただきます。

※締切と正確な住所の変更により、2冊の読者に当選された方は1冊分の賞品を辞退していただくことがあります。また1号の他の賞品に当選された場合、辞退をお願いすることがあります。

# Baby Steps
## ベイビーステップ

#72 初世界

勝木光
Katsuki Hikaru

＃73 In Florida

大人気Wカラー
2本立て2本目!!
巻頭カラーから読んでね!

フロリダ上陸!!
衝撃連発!!

全巻大増刷完了!!
最新第7巻
絶好調!!

# Baby Steps
ベイビーステップ

勝木光
Katsuki Hikaru

GO NACCHAN GO...
...I'LL DO MY BEST TOO!!
ハァ
ハァ
ハァ

imangascans.org

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rc.rchighway.net

# Baby Steps

ベイビーステップ

RAWs: Share

Cleaner: Stark

Translator: Auggie

Typesetter: Busaway

Proofreader: DeadlyFang

Q-Checker: ilikefood

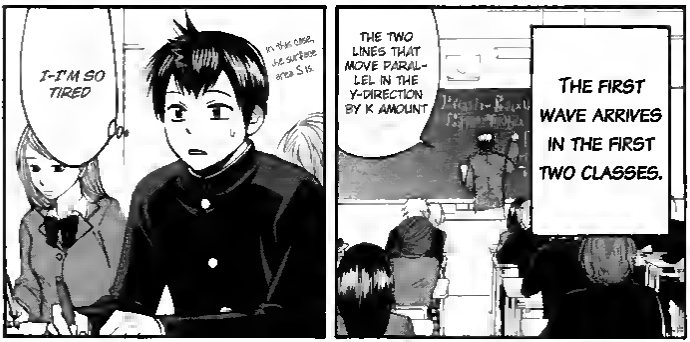
My daily life
It's February
One month left till the Prefecture Competition.
SO COLD!!
Starts with sunrise at 5:00 AM.
#101 TO THE SPRING OF BATTLES

Then I warm up my body with light stretching and a brief exercise...
Once I get dressed, the first thing I do is get some sugar from a banana.

5:30 AM. DAILY JOG AROUND THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD.
RIGHT NOW IS A VERY PRECIOUS TIME WHEN I CAN KEEP ON PUSH-ING MY LIMITS.

TODAY'S WEATHER DOESN'T LOOK SO GOOD...
ONCE I GET BACK, I TAKE A SHOWER THEN HAVE BREAKFAST.
KANTO REGION IS EXPECTING SOME SNOW
HERE TODAY'S OMELET RICE

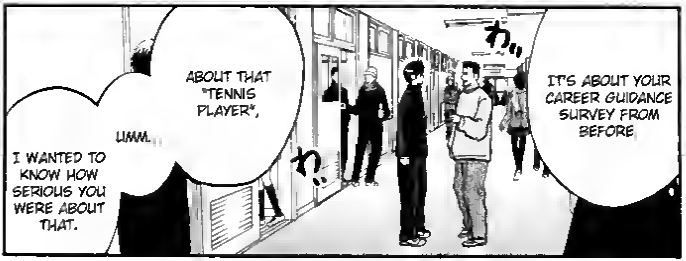
8:30 AM. ARRIVE AT SCHOOL.
HEY
IT'S SO COLD
MORNIN'

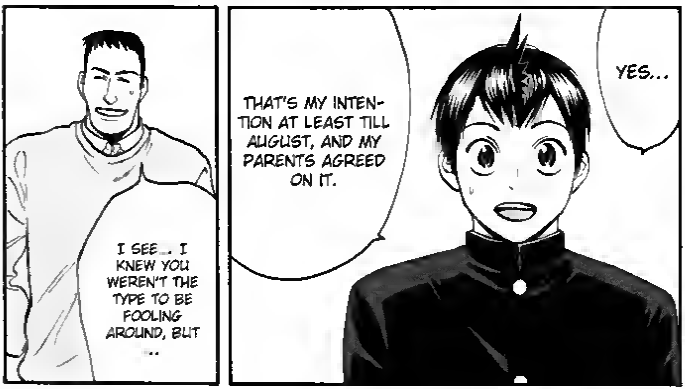

I-I'M SO TIRED
THE TWO LINES THAT MOVE PARALLEL IN THE Y-DIRECTION BY K AMOUNT
THE FIRST WAVE ARRIVES IN THE FIRST TWO CLASSES.

NO... SINCE I DON'T HAVE ANY TIME TO STUDY AT HOME, I CAN'T MISS OUT ON THE LECTURES AT SCHOOL.
キーン コーン カーン コーン
ALRIGHT THAT'S IT FOR TODAY
ISN'T HE ONLY AWAKE FOR LUNCH AND DURING FREE TIMES LATELY?
HE'S TIRED CAUSE HIS TRAINING'S GETTING TOUGHER.
GEEZ... HIS SWITCH GOES TOTALLY OFF WHEN THE CLASS ENDS

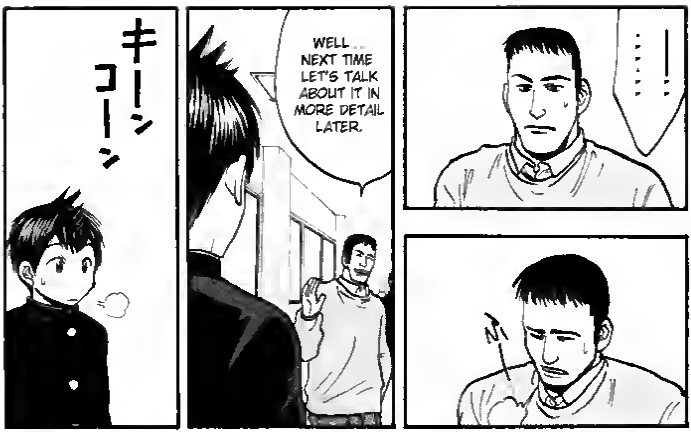
HEY, KAGEYAMA-KUN.
HMM?
IS IT TRUE THAT MARUO-KUN CAN'T GO TO THE FIELD TRIP?
YUP. NACCHAN TOO.
EHHHHH?! WHY?!
SAYS IT'S GOING TO HINDER THE MATCH IF HE DOESN'T KEEP ON WORKING HIS BODY FOR 3~4 DAYS STRAIGHT RIGHT BEFORE THE MATCH
THAT'S .. AN INCREDIBLE WORLD
IF HE'S GOING THAT FAR, I HOPE HE WINS
ALTHOUGH IT'S SUCH A SHAME ..
Three nights with Takasaki san
Three nights with Takasaki san
Three nights with Maruo kun
What in the world were you guys expecting?
キーン
OH, HIS SWITCH IS BACK ON.

12:40 PM. It's finally lunch time.
Hey Mariuo-kun. Can I see you for a minute?


It's about your career guidance survey from before
About that "tennis player",
Umm...
I wanted to know how serious you were about that.


Yes...
That's my intention at least till August, and my parents agreed on it.
I see... I knew you weren't the type to be fooling around, but...

YOUR GRADES LATELY HAVEN'T BEEN AS GOOD AS WHAT THEY WERE IN YOUR FIRST YEAR.
EVEN STILL, IF YOU WORK HARD FROM NOW ON YOU CAN DEFINITELY AIM FOR THE TOP-LEVEL COLLEGES WITH THE SCHOOL'S RECOMMENDATION.
ARE YOU AWARE THAT THE RECOMMENDATION GETS DECIDED ON AUGUST?
ONCE YOU PASS MARCH, EVERYONE STARTS DECIDING THEIR CAREER PATH...

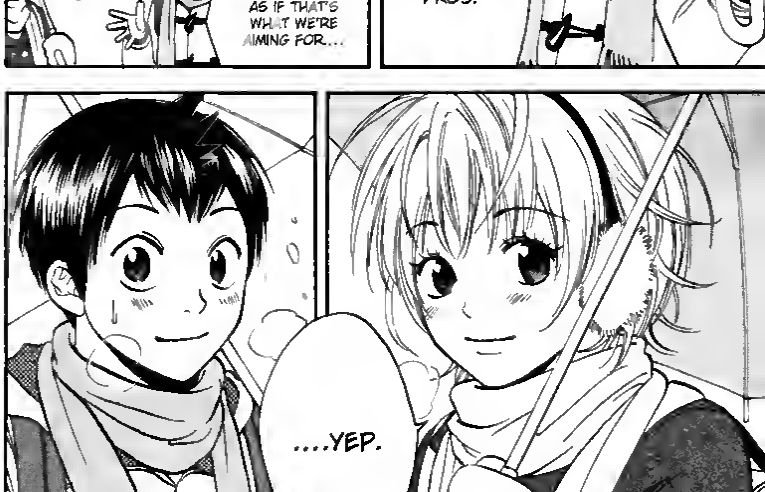

キーン
コーン
WELL... NEXT TIME LET'S TALK ABOUT IT IN MORE DETAIL LATER.
!
.....

ONCE I OVERCOME THE SECOND WAVE OF SLEEP IN THE AFTERNOON, SCHOOL'S OVER AT 4:00 PM
カーンコーン
IT'S SNOWING~ IT'S SNOWING ♪
WOW~
YUP. THANKS.
THAT'S YOUR PERSONAL BEST! GOOD WORK!
THAT'S RIGHT. YOU GOT IN THE BEST 4 IN ALL JAPAN JUNIOR INDOOR SELECTIONALS, RIGHT?

BUT I LOST AGAIN... TO SHIMIZU-SAN.
SHIMIZU-SAN IS THAT...
THIS ONE WAS THE MOST VEXING.
I WAS SO CLOSE...
.....!!
TH-THEN LET'S BEAT HER IN THE ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR!

AND... LET'S WIN TOGETHER... AND BECOME PROS!

SHOOT, I'M REALLY EMBAR-RASSED RIGHT NOW.
AH... I CAN'T REALLY BE SAYING THAT RIGHT NOW, BUT...
UMM... LET'S TRY HARD TOGETHER AS IF THAT'S WHAT WE'RE AIMING FOR...


....YEP.

5:00 PM. Arrive at STC. practice starts with stretching.
5:15 PM. The tension in the Court goes way up once we start the warm up.
DASH! 10 LAPS!

5:40 PM. Basic training. Check the control by repeating all the shots over and over.

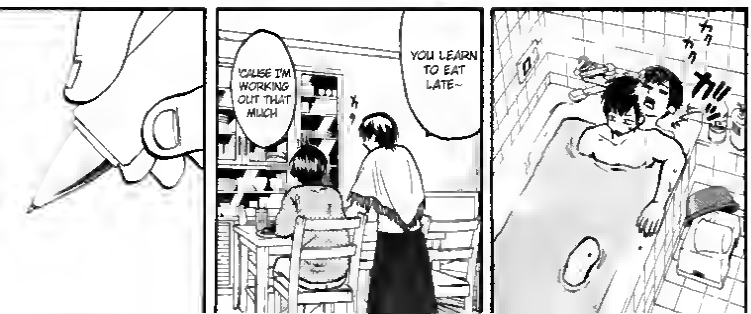
6:20 PM. Practice control in a rally match.
HA
AL-RIGHT. GREAT!!
1/64
INDUSTRIAL SYMPHONY NO 1

HA
7:30 PM. FAST SERVE PRACTICE THAT USES MY BODY LIKE A WHIP.
THOROUGHLY PRACTICE EVERY TYPE OF SPIN IN EVERY DIRECTION.
RGH...
8:00 PM. LAUNCH THE HELLISH BODY TRANSFORMATION MENU!
NOT YET. NOT YET. YOU STILL GOT 15 MORE SECONDS.
HERE!
HA

THAAA
YOU GOT 15 SECONDS!
the dream of the band
ONCE THAT ENDS, I GET A 20 MINUTE BREAK.
OUchh-hhhhhh
ぎゃ!
INDUSTRIAL SYMPHONY
THEN STRETCHING AND MUSCLE TRAINING WITH COACH AOI IN THE TRAINING ROOM.
もみもみ
LASTLY, COACH AOI CHECKS THE FATIGUE OF MY BODY.
C'MON, YOU CAN GO FASTER THAN THAT!
PHEW

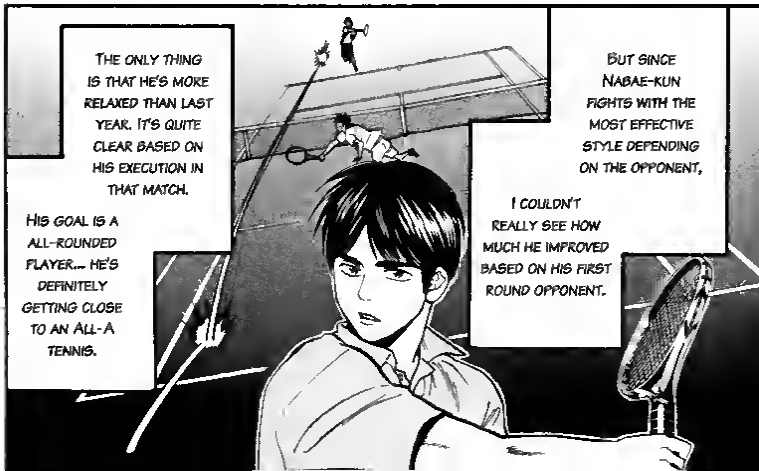
AND TO ACHIEVE A SERVE THAT'LL PUT ME IN AN ADVANTAGE WITH ONE STROKE.
EVERYTHING'S FOR THE CONTROL TO HIT ANYWHERE,
FOOTWORK TO GET EVERY BALL,

I'M BACK~
10:00 PM. ONCE I'M BACK HOME, I'M PRETTY MUCH AT MY LIMIT.


'CAUSE I'M WORKING OUT THAT MUCH
YOU LEARN TO EAT LATE~

うとうと
THE ACCURACY OF MY 6:4 PARTITION CONTROL'S BEEN GETTING PRETTY HIGH...
IN ALL JAPAN JUNIOR INDOOR SELECTIONAL,
NABAE-KUN WON BY BEATING KANDA-KUN AT THE FINALS.

OKADA-KUN WAS IN THE TOP 4,
AND ARAYA-KUN AND IDE-KUN GOT IN TO THE TOP 8.
ALTHOUGH I'VE SEEN MANY OTHER KEY PLAYERS AT THE 1ST ROUND,
SEEMS LIKE IT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT NABAE-KUN'S AT A ONE-STEP LEAD.


BUT SINCE NABAE-KUN FIGHTS WITH THE MOST EFFECTIVE STYLE DEPENDING ON THE OPPONENT,
I COULDN'T REALLY SEE HOW MUCH HE IMPROVED BASED ON HIS FIRST ROUND OPPONENT.
THE ONLY THING IS THAT HE'S MORE RELAXED THAN LAST YEAR. IT'S QUITE CLEAR BASED ON HIS EXECUTION IN THAT MATCH.
HIS GOAL IS A ALL-ROUNDED PLAYER... HE'S DEFINITELY GETTING CLOSE TO AN ALL-A TENNIS.

I'D PROBABLY HAVE TO FIGHT NAIBAE-KUN WITH SOMETHING LIKE A 100 PARTITION.
くぁー
IF HE DOES THAT.
I'LL ATTACK LIKE THIS!
11:00 PM. SLEEP, ALTHOUGH IMAGE TRAINING IS FUN, I FALL ASLEEP IN NO TIME.
カリカリ
カリカリ
カリカリ
DRIVE MY BODY TO ITS LIMITS, THEN ONCE I RECOVER MY BROKEN BODY, I PUSH IT TO THE LIMIT AGAIN...
JUST LIKE THIS, MY DAYS PROGRESSED SLOWLY BUT SURELY.

End of March has finally arrived.
The very first step that'll lead to my greatest goal, All Japan Junior.
The Kanagawa Prefecture Junior Tennis Competition.
My once in a lifetime challenge.
The battle that'll decide my future was finally about to start.

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# Baby Steps

ベイビーステップ

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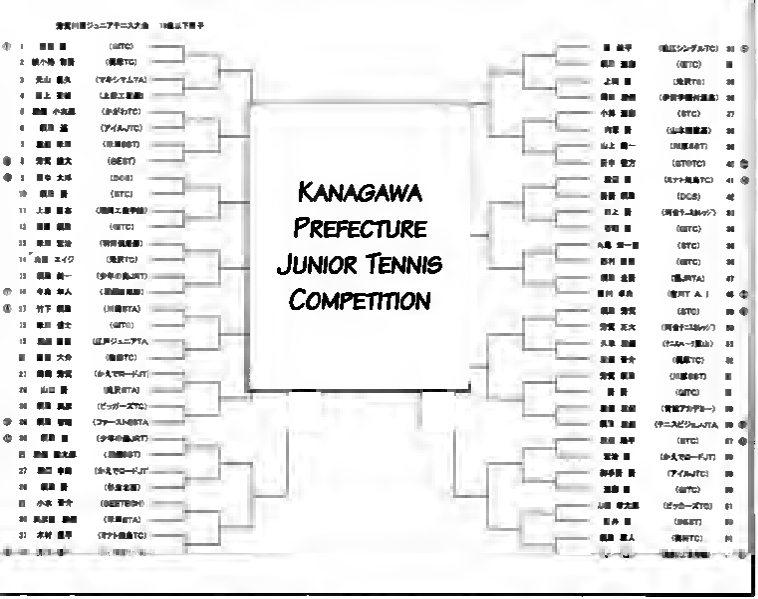
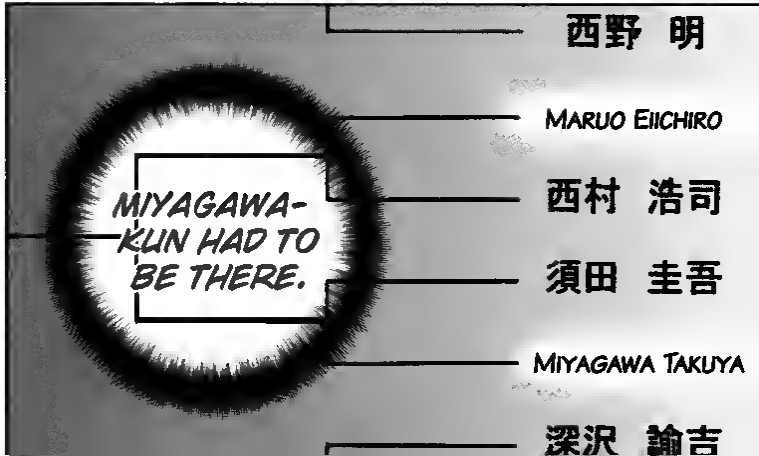


WE'LL START THE REGISTRATION FOR BELOW 18 MALES
IN OTHER WORDS, I CAN QUALIFY FOR KANTO JUNIOR IF I WIN TWICE...
THE TOP 64 PLAYERS IN THE PREFECTURE JUNIOR RANKING ARE GRANTED PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPETITION,
AND ONLY THE TOP 16 ARE ALLOWED TO ADVANCE TO KANTO JUNIOR, THE PRELIMINARY FOR THE ALL JAPAN JUNIOR.

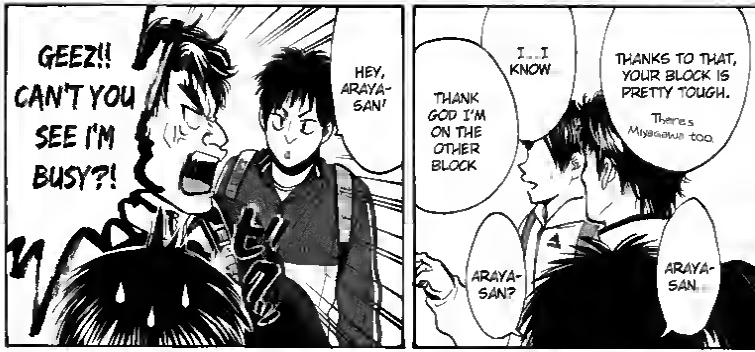
# #102 TURNING POINT.

AND DURING THE SECOND ROUND, OF ALL THINGS...
adidas


西野 明
MARUO EIICHIRO
西村 浩司
須田 圭吾
MIYAGAWA TAKUYA
深沢 諭吉
MIYAGAWA-KUN HAD TO BE THERE.

大会本部
ALTHOUGH I PLAN TO WIN REGARDLESS OF WHO MY OPPONENT IS,
TO GO AGAINST HIM IN THIS CRUCIAL ROUND...
NO! BEFORE THAT, THERE'S THE FIRST ROUND.
EVERY PARTICIPANT IN THIS COMPETITION IS AN ESTABLISHED PLAYER.
丸尾 栄一郎
西村 浩司
DESPITE THAT, I DON'T HAVE ANY DATA ON MY OPPONENT, NISHIMURA-KUN...
HEY MARUO!
ズッ
ラッ
AH... ARAYA-KUN.
YO, HOW'S IT GOING?

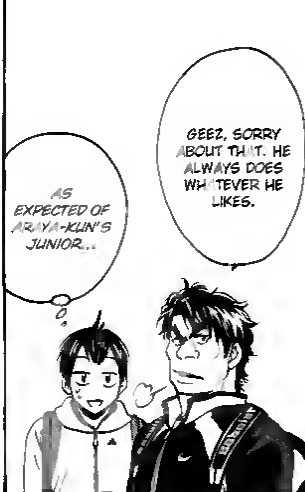
IS THE REASON YOU DON'T HAVE A SEED BECAUSE YOU HAVEN'T WON ENOUGH MATCHES?
THAT'S RIGHT. WEREN'T YOU IN THE KANTO SELECTIONALS LAST YEAR?
YUP THAT'S WHAT MY COACH SAID.
YOU'VE GOT QUITE A GROUP WITH YOU.
YEAH. THERE'S A FAIR NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN OUR CLUB THIS YEAR.
Most of them are my junior


GEEZ!! CAN'T YOU SEE I'M BUSY?!
HEY, ARAYA-SAN!
THANK GOD I'M ON THE OTHER BLOCK
I...I KNOW
THANKS TO THAT, YOUR BLOCK IS PRETTY TOUGH.
There's Miyagawa too.
ARAYA-SAN?
ARAYA-SAN...

HMM.....? AHH, THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT'S MARUO-SAN, RIGHT? INTRODUCE ME TO HIM PLEASE.
Y-YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO GET MAD...
That scared me!
MY BAD, MY BAD.
...SO WHAT.

丸尾 栄一
西村 浩司
須田 圭吾
宮 也
SO IT'S THAT PERSON
HE'S MY CLUB'S NISHIMURA KOUJI.
I THINK YOU TWO ARE PLAYING EACH OTHER ON THE FIRST ROUND
YUP.
ANYWAY, LET'S HAVE A GOOD MATCH.
AH...YES. NICE TO MEET YOU.
I SAW YOUR MATCH WITH ARAYA-SAN LAST YEAR.
I WAS ALSO IN THE STC CUP MARUO-SAN WON.
Although I only got to Top 8
...THAT NOTEBOOK IS VERY INTRIGUING
I'LL GO AND WARM UP THEN.

ALTHOUGH HE HASN'T BEEN PLAYING FOR THAT LONG, HE'S GOT GREAT PHYSIQUE AND STRONG SPIRIT. HE'S THE PERFECT TYPE FOR OUR CLUB.
BUT YOU SHOULDN'T LOOK DOWN ON HIM TOO MUCH.
AND IN TERMS OF COMPETITIONS UNDER THIS LEVEL LIKE THE ONES BELOW GRADE 4, HE'S DEFINITELY IN THE TOP 4.


GEEZ, SORRY ABOUT THAT. HE ALWAYS DOES WHATEVER HE LIKES.
AS EXPECTED OF ARAYA-KUN'S JUNIOR...

MOREOVER, I PERSONALLY PASSED DOWN EVERY LITTLE INFORMATION ABOUT YOU.

HE HAS THE FASTEST GROWTH IN OUR CLUB
HMM...

HUH...?

MORNING ARAYA-KUN, MARUO-KUN!
WA-WAIT A SEC WHAT DID YOU TELL HIM?
あは

LONG TIME NO SEE.
MIYAGAWA-KUN....!?
you cut your hair?
YUP, YUP. I TRIED GOING A BIT SHORTER.
Before
After
YOU LOOK A BIT MORE MATURE.
DO I?
HMMM... SO HE'S THE RUMORED MARUO-KUN?

HMM... HE'S MR. THIN EYEBROWS.
OUCH. THAT HURTS. INTRODUCE ME PROPERLY.
YOU CAN SEE THAT JUST BY LOOKING!!

NICE TO MEET YOU, I'M MOGAMI NORIHIKO.
AHH, HE'S MY FRIEND, BUT YOU CAN IGNORE HIM.

YU-KICHI-KUN!?
BY THE WAY,

THAT'S EXACTLY WHY I DIDN'T WANNA INTRODUCE YOU!
2ND SEED
3RD SEED
1ST SEED
I GATHERED UP POINTS WHILE HE KEPT ON LOSING BECAUSE OF HIS SLUMP.
YONEX

YUP.
HE'S THE 2ND SEED OF THIS COMPETITION.
EHH!?

ビキッ

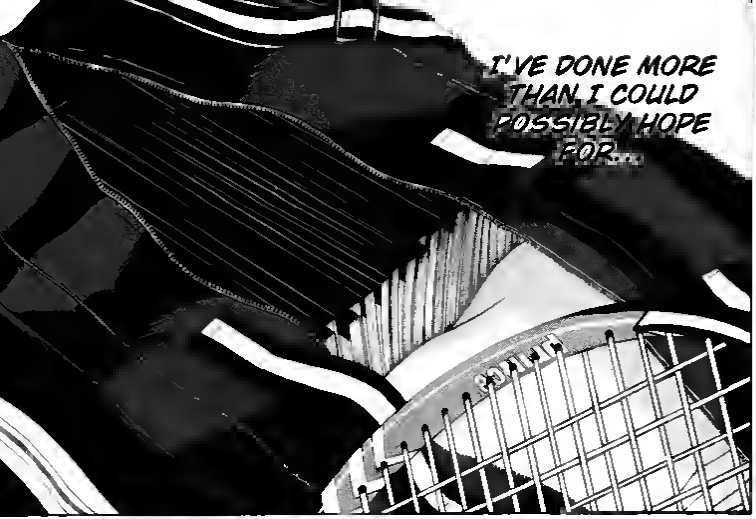
I TOLD YOU, I'M OFF THE SLUMP ALREADY.

ANYWAY MARUO-KUN. LET'S HAVE A GOOD MATCH TODAY.
YUP... I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT.
AHHHH THERE'S EI-CHAN!!
AH... NACCHAN.
HUH!?
SINCE TAKUMA-SAN'S NOT HERE THIS YEAR, WE ALL HAVE A CHANCE. RIGHT? ARAYA-KUN!
AT LEAST YOU WON'T HAVE A CHANCE CAUSE OF THE SLUMP
I TOLD YOU, I'M OUT OF IT ALREADY!!
YOU CAN ONLY SAY THAT AFTER YOU BEAT ME THE 2ND SEED

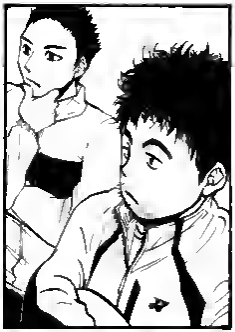
WE'RE FINALLY HERE.
YUP.
LET'S DO OUR BEST 'KAY!!
WOAH
I'M GONNA GO AND REGISTER, THEN
HMMM——?

What was that atmosphere right now?
WHAT WAS THAT...? SEEMED MORE THAN JUST A SIMPLE CLUB-MATE.
YOU SEEM TO BE IN A GOOD MOOD HUH~
REALLY? IS THAT HOW IT IS?
NO...WAIT... I... I'M GONNA GO WARM UP, OKAY?
HE RAN AWAY...
I dunno anything
WE'RE CALLING FOR PLAYERS SCHEDULED FOR 10:30.
NO.43, ISHIGAMI-KUN NO.44, NISHINO-KUN. PLEASE COME TO COURT NO.2.
NO.45, MARUO-KUN, NO.46, NISHIMURA-KUN. PLEASE BEGIN YOUR MATCH AT COURT NO.3.
AL-RIGHT!!

TODAY WAS "LET'S DO OUR BEST".
ALTHOUGH NACCHAN ALWAYS TOLD ME "DO YOUR BEST" BEFORE EVERY MATCH,
I MANAGED TO GET RID OF ALL MY FATIGUE DURING THE PAST TWO DAYS,
AND I HAD A PROPER MEAL THREE HOURS PRIOR.
MY WARM-UP IS COMPLETE TOO.
IS PROBABLY BECAUSE SHE KNOWS WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING.
THE REASON SHE THINKS OF ME AS A FELLOW TENNIS PLAYER AIMING FOR THE NATIONALS,
THE REASON I'M MORE RELAXED THAN I THOUGHT IS BECAUSE...
ALTHOUGH I THOUGHT I'D BE EXTREMELY NERVOUS BECAUSE IT'S MY VERY FIRST MATCH
AMONGST THE ONES I HAVE TO GIVE UP BECOMING A PRO IF I LOSE,


I'VE DONE MORE THAN I COULD POSSIBLY HOPE FOR...

PHEW... WE MADE IT!



ALL THAT'S LEFT...

ONE-SET MATCH. NISHIMURA, SERVICE PLAY!!
IS TO BELIEVE IN MYSELF AND FIGHT!!

ALTHOUGH IT'S MY RETURN GAME, I WOULD LIKE A SOLID START,
SINCE THE INITIAL FLOW OF THE GAME IS VERY CRUCIAL IN A ONE SET MATCH...
AL-RIGHT.
FIRST OFF, ONE POINT!
HA
A DEEP CONTROL WITH 1136..
HA
...FIRST, PLAY IT SAFE AND
RYA

OUT!
LOVE - 15

HA

A MISS ALREADY.. WHY?
IS IT CAUSE MY BALL IS A LOT STRONGER THAN HE EXPECTED?
OR IS IT BE-CAUSE HE'S IMPATIENT?

FOR A CLEAR CHANCE BALL LIKE THIS...
IT'S SHORT!

1/36

DEPENDING ON HOW HE RETURNS THIS ONE...
I SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIGURE OUT THE REASON

FINISH IT!!

BASED ON THIS INSTABILITY IT'S PROBABLY BOTH

LOVE - 30
TCH

NISHIMURA-KUN IS PROBABLY RUSHING TO GET AN EARLY ADVANTAGE AFTER SEEING MY MATCH AGAINST ARAYA WHERE I STOLE THE LEAD EARLY ON.
EVER SINCE THE FLORIDA CAMP, I HAD TO HIT A HEAVY OFFENSIVE BALL FOR EVEN MY MOST RISK-FREE SHOTS.
THAT, BEING A LOT HARDER TO HIT THAN I IMAGINED, AND...

A TWO POINT LEAD IN A RETURN GAME.
MY OPPONENT IS STILL HAVING TROUBLE ADJUSTING.
IF THAT'S THE CASE...
THIS MIGHT ALREADY BE THE TURNING POINT!!
OKAY!!

# RECRUITMENT

DUE TO THE URGENT NEED OF A PROOFREADER FOR BABY STEPS. FIRST, WE ARE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO CAN COMMIT FOR THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF THIS SERIES. SECOND, MUST BE ABLE TO POTENTIALLY DO 3-5 CHAPTERS A WEEK IN THE FUTURE. THIRD, WE PREFER SOMEONE TO HAVE A DECENT GRASP OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. SOMEONE WHO TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE FLOW, GRAMMAR, AND PUNCTUATION (AND NOT JUST SOMEONE WHO VAGUELY THINKS SO). LASTLY, TENNIS KNOWLEDGE IS OPTIONAL BUT NOT NECESSARY. IF YOU THINK YOU QUALIFY IN AT LEAST 3 CATEGORIES, PLEASE APPLY AT HTTP://IMANGASCANS.ORG/APPLY// AND POST A COMMENT ABOUT YOURSELF. QUALIFICATIONS, INTENTIONS, AND AVAILABILITY. THANK YOU, LOOKING TO HEAR FROM YOU :) ENJOY THIS CHAPTER

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# Baby Steps

ベイビーステップ

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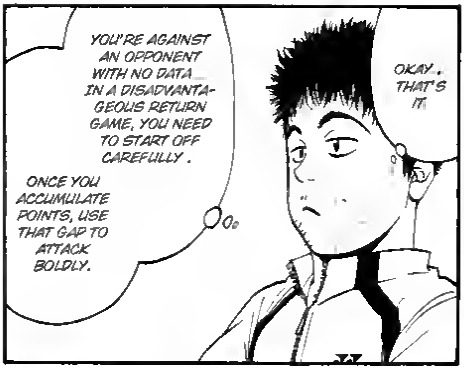
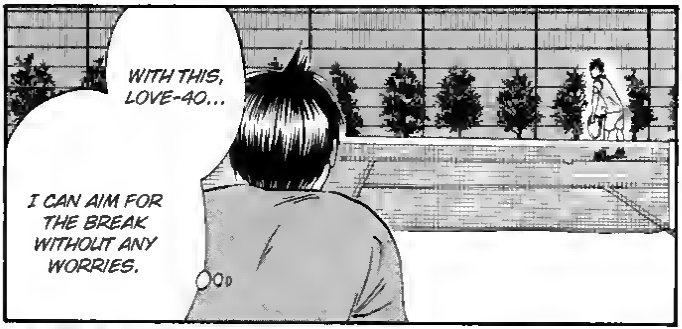
IT'S ONLY BEEN TWO POINTS SINCE THE GAME STARTED...
BUT... THIS IS PROBABLY THE TURNING POINT ALREADY.
#103 AMOUNT OF CHANGE
HA
HA
IF IT'S A CHANCE, DON'T HESITATE AND...
GO FOR IT!!

RETURN DASH!!

HA
M-MOVING UP SO SUD-DENLY?!
HA
AL-RIGHT!!
LOVE - 40
HIGH RISK ATTACK SUC-CEEDED!!

FOR SWITCHING TO OFFENSE SUDDENLY, HE'S GOT A FIRM CONTROL.


OKAY. THAT'S IT.
YOU'RE AGAINST AN OPPONENT WITH NO DATA IN A DISADVANTAGEOUS RETURN GAME, YOU NEED TO START OFF CAREFULLY.
ONCE YOU ACCUMULATE POINTS, USE THAT GAP TO ATTACK BOLDLY.


WITH THIS, LOVE-40...
I CAN AIM FOR THE BREAK WITHOUT ANY WORRIES.

RAMP UP THE 113% CONTROL TILL NOW TO...
ドッ

HA
ハァ

RGH
1/64!!
IT'S SLOWER!! TAKE THIS BALL RIGHT ...
TCH... THE BALL JUMPED RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME!!
DOWN THE LINE, 1/81!!

DAH!!
WHAT THE HECK IS THIS?!
OHHH HE RETURNED IT!!
LOWER THE RISK AND GO IN!!
A FAST BALL AS HE'S GOING OFF BALANCE . THAT MEANS HE CAN'T RECOVER IN TIME...

BREAK!!
AL-RIGHT!
GAME, MARUO. 1 - 0.
I WON'T LOSE IF I CAN KEEP MY SERVES!!
OKAY... I'M IN A ONE-STEP LEAD NOW!!
BASED ON THE LOOKS OF IT, PROB-ABLY.
HE CAN HIT EVEN FASTER, RIGHT?
HE LANDED AN ACE EVEN WITH THAT SPEED
HEY... THAT WAS AMAZING CONTROL

IN OTHER WORDS,
FOR THIS SERVE, EVEN IF HE BREAKS, IT'S STILL A TIE.
I HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT HERE TOO!!
USE MY BODY LIKE A WHIP...!
SYNCHRONIZE...

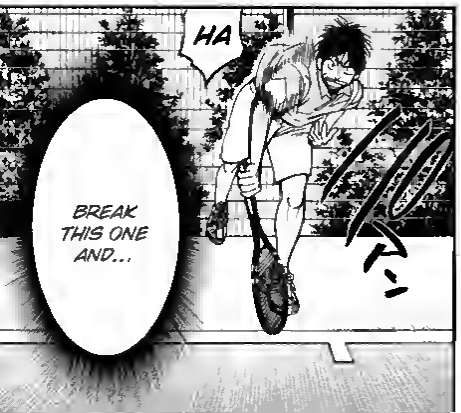
15 - LOVE
!!
ALRIGHT..! MY CONDITION'S GREAT TODAY.
WOW, AMAZING!!
WITH THAT BODY... FOR REAL?
ALSO, HIS SERVES ARE NOTHING
HIS TENNIS IS FUNDA-MENTALLY DEFENSIVE.
EVEN IF YOU DON'T RUSH, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND A CHANCE FOR A BREAK
Y-YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?!

RGH
HA
WHO'S SERVE IS NOTHING?!
HA
WHERE THE HECK IS "DEFENSIVE"!!
30 – LOVE

40 – LOVE
slice?
NOT ONLY IS THE SERVE FAST, THERE'S PLENTY OF VARIETY TOO.
EVEN THOUGH HIS STROKES ARE PRIMARILY CONTROL SHOTS...
HE'S ATTACKING RELENTLESSLY!!
HA
GAME, MARUO. 2 - 0

I CAN DO IT!!
AL-RIGHT!! 2-0.

I CAN TELL THAT MY SERVE AND MY CONTROL HAVE GOTTEN A WHOLE LOT BETTER THAN BEFORE
IT'S NOT THAT NISHIMURA-KUN'S IN A BAD CONDITION OR THAT HE'S WEAK.

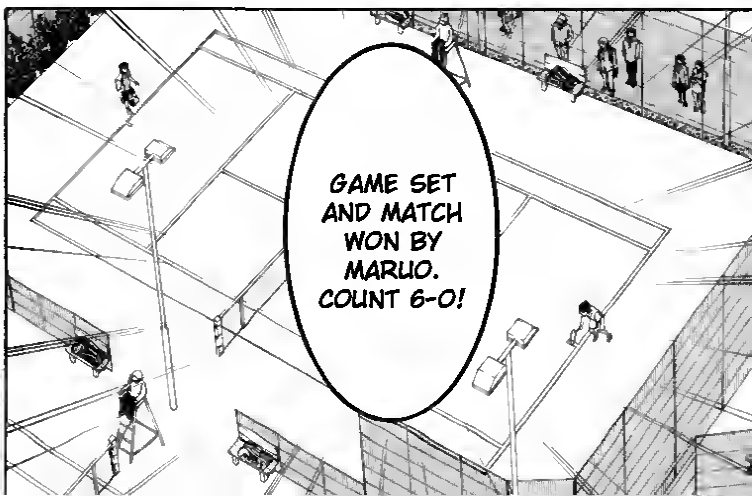

HA
BREAK THIS ONE AND...

IT'S TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT I'VE HEARD!!

HA
I'LL END IT IN ONE GO!!
AND HE HASN'T SHOWN HIS FULL STRENGTH YET
YOU'RE RIGHT.
YIKES~ THIS IS QUITE AN OPPONENT.
LOVE - 15
AS I THOUGHT
MARUO-KUN HAS BEEN CHANGING EVER SINCE THEN.

THAT'S WHY I'VE BEEN TRYING TO CHANGE MY TENNIS PLAYING SINCE THEN.
EVEN WHEN I FELL INTO A SLUMP, I KEPT ON PURSUING MY NEW TENNIS STYLE.
BACK THEN... I REALIZED BECAUSE I LOST TO MARUO-KUN!
THE ME WHO TRIED TO CHANGE BY LOOKING AWAY FROM MY WEAKNESS.
I'M CRAVING FOR A MORE DEFINITE ANSWER.
GAME, MARUO. 3 - 0
15 - 40
I THINK I FINALLY STARTED TO SEE THE LIGHT, BUT
THAT'S WHY I'LL BEAT MARUO-KUN.

LET'S SEE HOW MUCH WE CHANGED.


GAME SET AND MATCH WON BY MARUO. COUNT 6-0!

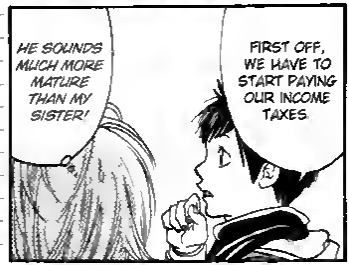
YOU DID IT MARUO-KUN!!
ALRIGHT, YOU TOTALLY OWNED!!
6-0... COMPLETELY ONE SIDED.
DIDN'T MARUO USED TO PLAY A MORE PERSISTENT TENNIS?
IF HE CAN DO THAT WITH THOSE, IT'S GONNA BE TOUGH.
WELL, THIS IS THE LEAST YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM HIM.
THANKS!
THANK YOU SO MUCH

IT'S BIG THAT I MANAGED TO WIN WITHOUT TOO MUCH FATIGUE
I WAS ABLE TO CONFIRM A COUPLE OF THINGS TOO, AND MY MIND-SET IS IN GREAT CONDITION!!
I CAN CARRY OVER TO THE NEXT ROUND IN THE BEST CONDITION!!

C'mon that was a piece of cake.
Congratu-lations~
MARUO EIICHIRO. KANAGAWA PREFECTURE JUNIOR. 1ST ROUND, EASY WIN!!
<<TO BE CONTINUED IN VOL 12 >>

## ADULT

SHE CAME BACK ALL DRUNK AND STUFF~
I don't expect her to turn into a kissing demon
I DEFINITELY DON'T WANT TO TURN INTO THAT KIND OF ADULT.




Good morning everyone, this is Katsuki.

The drama on the right is the one that was on 2010 Magazine issue 7. The topic was "Adult". When I turned 20, I was at Okayama for reporting on the Inter high. How nostalgic...

Also the trainings that come up in the work is based on my research and resources, but it could be dangerous depending on the person, so please don't try it without consulting a trainer.

We're finally moving toward the All Japan Junior. Even I don't know what's going to happen.

Then see you next volume.